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CABLE Gram Volume 3 Issue 65

5 December 2006 CABLE Gram™

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Take care,

Zhi Hamby-Nye, Editor

Henry Ziegler, Associate Editor

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We search the topics and Websites that you request, so it is important for you to provide feedback. We are in our infancy and the CABLE Gram will be as useful as you help make it. Please let us know the topics and keywords that will assist you in your professional endeavors. Send all comments and suggestions to zhi@cablegram.org – please type CABLE Gram in the subject line.

FEDERAL

1. DHS Implementing Secret Risk Assessments For Int'l Travelers (Business Travel News Online, 4 Dec 2006)

The Homeland Security Department's new system for prescreening travelers to and from the United States is slated to go into effect today, drawing the ire of travel and privacy groups. The Automated Targeting System assigns a threat-assessment ranking to all inbound and outbound travelers, but the rules for determining threat assessments and any redress for air passengers remains unavailable. DHS in an assessment of the program released last month said risk rankings are based on passenger name record data, noting that DHS is not collecting any new data from passengers. The system allows customs officers to determine if a "passenger or crewmember should receive additional screening prior to entry into or departure from the country because the traveler may pose a greater risk for violation of U.S. law," DHS said in a filing. The system reportedly had been secretly tested on millions of international passengers for four years.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?F28612F4E>

2. DHS proposes 'global' sharing on terrorist info (Washington Technology, 30 Nov 2006)

Yesterday, a Homeland Security Department senior official presented the outline of an ambitious plan for internationally sharing biometric identification information regarding individuals who pose terrorist threats. Robert Mocny, acting director of the U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology program, outlined a proposal under which the United States would begin exchanging information about terrorists, first with closely allied governments in Britain, Europe and Japan, and then progressively extending the program to other countries as a means of foiling terrorist attacks. The Global Envelope proposal apparently opened the door to the exchange of biometric information about persons in this country to other governments and vice versa, in an environment where even officials' pledges to observe privacy principles collide with inconsistent or absent legal protections.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?V19652F4E>

3. DHS Plan for 'Virtual' Border Fence Still Has Gaps (Washington Post, 05 Dec 2006)

A Bush administration plan to build a "virtual" fence along the Mexico border will cost \$7.6 billion and be completed by 2011, but the government lacks clear benchmarks for

success, according to a report to Congress by the Department of Homeland Security. Confirming well-known problems along the Mexican border, DHS also reported that the United States had "effective control" over only 284 miles of its 1,993-mile southern frontier as of March, up from 241 miles in October 2005. The department set a goal of controlling 345 miles next year and the full border in five years. But it acknowledged not having "a wholly satisfactory methodology" of defining "control."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?P27962F4E>

4. Is the FBI doing its best to combat terrorism? (NBC, 04 Dec 2006)

Bassem Youssef is the FBI's highest-ranking Arab-American agent. He's fluent in Arabic, ran the FBI's offices in Saudi Arabia and is a terrorism expert. In fact, Youssef's undercover work helping to infiltrate the terror organization of the so-called "blind sheik," Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, earned him the intelligence community's most-prestigious award, the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal. But now, for the first time, Youssef is speaking out against the agency he loves. "I don't believe that the FBI's doing everything it can to combat terrorism," the 18-year FBI veteran tells NBC News.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16042604/>

5. New DHS disaster preparedness ads play down terrorism (By Jon Fox, Global Security Newswire, 4 Dec 2006)

The Homeland Security Department has rolled out a new crop of commercials designed make families aware of the need to prepare for catastrophic emergencies including the aftermath of terrorism. However, the new public service announcements never mention terrorism as they direct viewers to the government disaster preparedness Web site Ready.gov. While the Web site's focus was explicitly on terrorism when it was launched in 2003, Homeland Security officials said the agency is now moving toward an "all hazards" campaign.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=35589&dcn=e_gvet

6. Biden calls for homeland security trust fund (Washington Technology, 5 Dec 2006)

Congress should set aside \$53.3 billion over five years in a Homeland Security trust fund to fully implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., recommended Monday. Biden, who will chair the Senate Foreign Relations Committee starting in January, said in a statement that he intends to introduce legislation to create the fund. The financing would be made available for homeland security through a partial rollback of the tax cuts enacted by Congress in 2001 and 2003. The independent, bipartisan 9/11 Commission issued 41 recommendations for national security in its final report in July 2004, including advice to DHS to improve incident command, cargo screening, intelligence, information-sharing and private-sector preparedness. The Public Discourse Project issued a report card in December 2005 on progress toward achieving the goals. The proposed \$53 billion in funding would cover the cost of hiring 50,000 new

police officers and 1,000 FBI agents; require 100 percent cargo container screening at our nation's sea ports and ensure first responder interoperable communications by implementing technical standards and providing new equipment to response agencies, Biden said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?C3A621F4E>

7. U.S. to create 'risk assessments' of air passengers (c|net, 5 Dec 2006)

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has implemented a data-mining system for all passengers traveling to the U.S., including travelers from the European Union. The Automated Targeting System (ATS) is a data-mining system that will let the agency create "risk assessments" of tens of millions of travelers. The information will be held for 40 years, and even U.S. citizens will have no right to view those risk assessments. "With respect to the data that ATS creates, i.e. the risk assessment for an individual, the risk assessment is for official law enforcement use only and is not communicated outside of CBP (Bureau of Customs and Border Protection) staff, nor is it subject to access under the Privacy Act," said a Department of Homeland Security assessment of the system's impact on privacy. Risk assessments will be used to determine whether the subject is deemed a security threat, or is likely to contravene any article of U.S. law. However, the Department of Homeland Security has said that innocent passengers may not even be aware that information on them is being mined or that risk assessments are being formed.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?J3CD21F4E>

8. Verified Identity Pass moves to front of line (Washington Technology, 30 Nov 2006)

The Homeland Security Department has authorized a subsidiary of Verified Identity Pass Inc. as the first entity eligible to offer Registered Traveler services at airports nationwide. Officials from Clear, Verified's New York subsidiary, said in a written statement that the Transportation Security Administration notified them Nov. 24 that the company meets TSA's minimum criteria for the rollout, which is expected within several months. Clear CEO Steven Brill said he anticipates initiating Registered Traveler services next month at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York as well as at airports in San Jose, Calif., Indianapolis and Cincinnati, and expanding to as many as 20 airports within a year. Clear is awaiting final TSA approval for next month's deployment, Brill said in the release. "The next step," he said, "involves TSA reviewing and approving specific security plans and plans of operation at the five launching airports, a process that is under way and on track."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.washingtontechnology.com/news/1_1/daily_news/29796-1.html

9. Muslims Seek Prayer Room at Airport (AP, 01 Dec 2006)

Airport officials said Friday they will consider setting aside a private area for prayer and meditation at the request of imams concerned about the removal of six Muslim clerics from a US Airways flight last week. Steve Wareham, director of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, said other airports have "meditation rooms" used for prayers or by

passengers who simply need quiet time. A group of Somali clerics met with airport officials Friday and said they would attract less attention if they had a private area for prayer. Devout Muslims pray five times daily, facing the holy city of Mecca. "When we pray, we don't want a problem. We don't want what happened last week," said Abdulrehman Hersi, an imam at Darul-Quba mosque in Minneapolis, referring to six clerics who were barred from a US Airways flight in Minneapolis after drawing the concern of some passengers.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.wtopnews.com/?nid=104&sid=992962>

10. Statewide radio interoperability carries hefty price tag (Washington Technology, 1 Dec 2006)

State emergency managers estimate it will cost \$7 billion to achieve statewide interoperable communications for first responders, according to a new survey published by the National Emergency Management Association. The group also believes it will cost \$1.5 billion to build, retrofit and upgrade emergency operations centers nationwide, which includes expenditures for equipment, software and personnel. These are nerve centers where emergency managers, police, fire and medical supervisors gather to coordinate their activities in responding to a disaster. Nearly \$400 million is needed for urgent improvements to state operations centers, and \$1.1 billion for local operations centers, the report said. The survey is the basis for the 2006 Biennial Report issued by the association highlighting major concerns and trends in the field. It is a professional group representing state emergency managers, who plan and direct state response to disasters and major incidents. The survey collected information from state emergency managers in 46 states.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?C1B615F4E>

11. DHS needs interim strategy for border protection (The Heritage Foundation, 22 Nov 2006)

The Homeland Security Department will need a new, short-term bridging strategy if it wants to move quickly to achieve operational control of the U.S. southern border, two leading scholars recommend in a newly published memorandum. Congress approved the Secure Fence Act this year authorizing more manpower, surveillance and fencing for the border with Mexico to stop illegal traffic within 18 months. However, hiring additional border patrol agents and implementing most of the other measures will take longer than 18 months, wrote James Jay Carafano, senior fellow for national security and homeland security, and David Muhlhausen, senior policy analyst, with the Heritage Foundation think tank.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/upload/em_1015.pdf

12. Pakistani from NY accused of aiding Sikh militants (Reuters, 5 Dec 2006)

NEW YORK - Federal prosecutors on Monday said a Pakistani living in New York wired money and tried to send foot soldiers to a Sikh militant organization aimed at violently forcing India's government into letting the group form its own state. Khalid Awan knew

the \$25,000 that two Sikh businessmen gave him to transfer to a Khalistan Commando Force leader in 2001 "was for bad things and that innocent people would die," federal prosecutor Lawrence Ferazani said. Ferazani spoke in Brooklyn federal court during opening arguments of Awan's trial on counts of providing material support or resources to terrorists, conspiracy to provide material support or resources to terrorists and money laundering to promote terrorism.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?X3C622F4E>

13. Investigators probe DHS manager's scheme to fake immigration papers (GovExec.com, 4 Dec 2006)

The Homeland Security Department's inspector general and the FBI are reviewing the circumstances that allowed a veteran federal manager to falsify immigration documents in exchange for \$600,000 in bribes. Robert T. Schofield, a manager at the Citizenship and Immigration Services bureau within DHS, pleaded guilty Thursday to taking bribes from Asian immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship. The Justice Department announced when Schofield was arrested in June that the FBI and DHS' inspector general were investigating the matter. DHS would not comment on the IG's role in the investigation; separate calls to the inspector general's office were not returned. The FBI also did not respond to requests for comment on Friday.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=35585&dcn=e_gvet

14. Arrests resulting from DHS investigations on the rise (GovExec.com, 5 Dec 2006)

Investigations by the Homeland Security Department's inspector general led to more than 300 arrests during a recent six-month span, continuing a trend of rising arrests, indictments and convictions in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. IG actions led to 321 arrests and 243 convictions from April 2006 to September 2006, according to a report released Monday. That represents an increase of 61 percent in arrests over the previous six-month period and a 98 percent jump in convictions. The number of arrests, indictments and convictions for both periods was greater than ever before in the Homeland Security Department's brief history.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=35596&dcn=e_gvet

STATE AND LOCAL NEWS

15. AZ: Davis Monthan AFB to conduct nuclear weapons accident simulation (KVOA, 4 Dec 2006)

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. - From December 4-14, 2006, the Department of Defense will conduct a variety of concurrent exercise events to test DOD responses to various attacks on the homeland. Vigilant Shield 07 (VS 07) emphasizes the synchronized response of three combatant commands (NORAD, USNORTHCOM and USSTRATCOM) to a homeland defense scenario. Over the ten days of the exercise, participants will be engaged in unclassified and classified round-the-clock exercise

activity. Vigilant Shield 07 (VS 07) will evaluate North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) in simulated events with a focus on air intercepts and cruise missile/ unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) defense of our nation. NORAD activities during VS 07 will take place at Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center, and the three NORAD regions (Alaska NORAD Region, Canadian NORAD Region and U.S. Continental NORAD Region).

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://kvoa.com/Global/story.asp?S=5764907&nav=HMO6>

16. AZ: Phoenix airport set to test all-seeing x-ray (engadget, 4 Dec 2006)

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport looks to have the distinct honor of being the first airport in the United States to put the controversial "backscatter" x-ray technology to use, the very same excessively-intimate inspection technique that made its debut at London's Heathrow airport a couple of years back. The airport won't just be taking a peek at everyone that passes through the gate, however, instead using the scanner as a backup to existing screening measures -- and, even then, individuals will have the option of a pat-down search instead of the picture postcard seen here. What's more, unlike earlier implementations of the technology, the Transportation Security Administration has reportedly sanitized the end results somewhat, with certain areas being discreetly blurred out, and no images saved after the person steps away from the machine.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.engadget.com/2006/12/04/phoenix-airport-set-to-test-all-seeing-x-ray/>

17. CA: S.J. frequent fliers signing up for fast-track passes (Mercury News, 4 Dec 2006)

What's it worth to a harried frequent flier to avoid those long airport security lines? Apparently a lot, especially to anyone rushing to catch an early morning flight at Mineta San Jose International Airport. Since registration began in September for the new registered traveler "Clear cards" -- government-approved ID cards that allow pre-screened passengers to skip long security queues -- travelers have been signing up at a faster pace in San Jose than even at New York's JFK Terminal 7, which handles a heavy international and cross-country load.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.mercurynews.com/ml/mercurynews/living/16159734.htm>

18. DC: Police probing suspicious package reports in DC (Reuters, 5 Dec 2006)

WASHINGTON - Police were investigating reports on Tuesday of suspicious packages at three locations in the U.S. capital, including one near the White House that was later determined to be harmless, officials said. Authorities blocked off some streets around the White House because of a parcel lobbed by a homeless woman into the courtyard of an office building adjacent to the presidential mansion, the Secret Service said. "The package was declared safe," Darrin Blackford, spokesman for the Secret Service, said. "It wasn't anything threatening." The woman who threw the package into the courtyard of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, where government officials have offices, was being questioned, Blackford said. "It is unknown at this time whether she will be charged with anything."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?I2D632F4E>

19. FL: Air Traffic System Crashes in S. Florida (AP, 5 Dec 2006)

A computerized air traffic system experienced a temporary outage in South Florida, forcing controllers to ground some flights and resulting in at least four instances in which planes almost came too close together, officials said Tuesday. Monday's outage affecting the Miami Center radar complex lasted about an hour, but a backup system was activated and flights in the air were not in danger, said Kathleen Bergen, a Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman in Atlanta. "There was never a loss of communication with flights and controllers did not lose their radar displays," Bergen said. Still, the outage caused confusion and tension among controllers in Miami, who had trouble establishing and maintaining aircraft identification because enough flight plan information was not available through their computers, said Steven Wallace, president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association in Miami. The problem was caused by failure of a telecommunications cable linking high-altitude air traffic control centers in Miami and San Juan, Puerto Rico, Bergen said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.breitbart.com/news/2006/12/05/D8LQSS500.html>

20. FL: Marathon airport to get screeners (CentreDaily.com, 1 Dec 2006)

Scheduled commercial airline flights will begin at Marathon's airport in mid-February, after a monthslong delay in getting screeners. The Transportation Security Administration sent a letter to Peter Horton, Monroe County's Director of Airports, on Friday saying that it has approved the Florida Keys Marathon Airport's and Key West International Airport's proposal to have a private company provide screening. Because Marathon wanted screeners by Feb. 15, and it is unlikely that a private screening contract can be reached by then, TSA said its employees will handle screening at the airport in the meantime. Delta Air Lines and Continental Connection had planned to launch flights to Atlanta, Tampa and Fort Lauderdale beginning in late October and November.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.centredaily.com/mld/centredaily/news/nation/16143052.htm>

21. NJ/NY: E. Coli Sickens 39 in New Jersey and New York (New York Times, 5 Dec 2006)

At least 39 people in central New Jersey and on Long Island were infected, two of them critically, with E. coli bacteria in an outbreak of food poisoning last month that has been traced to the Taco Bell restaurant chain, health officials in New York and New Jersey said yesterday. It was the nation's most serious outbreak of E. coli toxins since mid-September, when the same strain of the bacteria, linked to packages of contaminated spinach grown in California, killed three people and infected more than 200 in 26 states. Taco Bell, which serves burritos, quesadillas and other Mexican specialties in 5,800 outlets in the United States and generated sales of \$6.2 billion last year, voluntarily closed one outlet in South Plainfield, N.J., where 20 customers and 2 workers became infected, and eight other restaurants on Long Island, in what it called a temporary precaution to sanitize and restock outlets where E. coli had been traced. Epidemiologists

in New Jersey and New York said that no new cases had been reported since Wednesday but that they were continuing to monitor the situation. Taco Bell said it was cooperating with state investigators, who were still searching for the ingredient that carried the contamination. "Health officials have indicated that there is no immediate threat and whatever may have occurred has most likely passed through the system," said Greg Creed, Taco Bell's president.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?E2AD24F4E>

KEY PEOPLE

22. FBI chief: Hampton Roads unit vital to agency work (Daily Press, 1 Dec 2006)

NORFOLK - Cyber crime, terrorism, public corruption and violent crime are among the chief concerns for FBI agents working in the Hampton Roads area, the agency's director said Thursday during a stop at the Norfolk office. "Norfolk is a very important city given the naval contingent," said Robert S. Mueller III. The FBI's Norfolk Division "also is important to us, and it has done tremendous work over the last several years, whether it's terrorism, cyber crime, public corruption or violent crime," he said. "Each of these are priorities for the FBI, and we've made substantial strides in this division against these various threats," said Mueller, who was appointed by President Bush to head the agency in September 2001, just seven days before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?P2E621F4E>

23. L.I. teens' brains vs. bioterror (NY Daily News, 5 Dec 2006)

Two Long Island students with the ambitious goals of detecting the early signs of cancer and bioterrorism took home \$30,000 in the Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology yesterday. Jinju Yi, 16, of Plainview and Vijay Jain, 17, of New Hyde Park snagged fourth place in the team division of the prestigious competition. Their complex project involved creating a detection mechanism made up of a 1-by-2-centimeter chip that tests solutions for differences that may indicate nefarious substances, such as cancerous cells or microbes used by bioterrorists.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nydailynews.com/boroughs/story/477116p-401446c.html>

GANG ACTIVITY

24. AZ: Gang violence spreads across city (Arizona Star Net, 3 Dec 2006)

Gang-related slayings in Tucson have nearly doubled this year from last — the most startling sign, police say, of an overall rise in gang crime and its spread across the city. To date, 19 people have died in gang-related killings in 2006, up from 10 in 2005. Over the last five years, the city averaged 8.2 gang-related slayings a year, police say. While the problem has historically been seen as rooted on the South and West sides, police note that eight of the 19 homicides have been on the East Side and in Midtown. A map of 305 known violent gang-related crimes or arrests in 2005 and 2006 reaches every corner of the city except the farthest Southeast Side.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.azstarnet.com/allheadlines/158768>

25. FL: Student Brawl May Have Been Gang Initiation (Local 6, 4 Dec 2006)

DELTONA, Fla. - Four students were charged with aggravated battery Monday after an apparent gang-initiation fight on the campus of Pine Ridge High School, according to witnesses who talked to Local 6 News. One of the four students was also charged with possessing a knife on campus. The victim lost a tooth in the fight, and the melee was captured on cell-phone cameras so other gang members would know that the initiation process was completed. Police officials said the video will not be released, but it could lead to expulsions and arrests of several students.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.local6.com/news/10461088/detail.html>

26. NJ: Gang member shot to death in city (The Trentonian, 5 Dec 2006)

TRENTON - Another Bloods gang member was shot dead on a street known for drug-dealing yesterday, the third gang murder in four days, police said. Breon Blackshear, 24, who served two years in prison on drug charges, was gunned down by at least six bullets at 9:25 a.m. on New Rose Street near Brunswick Avenue. Blackshear, who lived on Wainwright Avenue, is listed in city police records as a member of the Bloods.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?G16E21F4E>

27. NJ: Gang activity increasing in Cumberland (Press of Atlantic City, 2 Dec 2006)

Construction and retail aren't the only businesses that are booming in Cumberland County. The arrests earlier this month of four alleged Bloods gang members in connection with the January murder of Vineland resident Leroy Lindsey has brought to light the extent of gang activities in the region, and law enforcement officials say the worst is yet to come. "It's a growing organism and it's getting bigger," said Detective Dominic Patitucci, a gang expert in the Major Crimes Unit of the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office. "There's heavy recruiting taking place right now." Gang activity in New Jersey has historically been confined to the state's large — and poor — cities like Paterson, Newark and Camden. Like any other savvy business, however, street gangs that peddle in illicit drugs and other illegal activities focus on markets that are still untapped.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?J19D31F4E>

28. NM: Gang making inroads in southern Otero County (Alamogordo Daily News, 1 Dec 2006)

Southern Otero County is playing host to some unwelcome guests. Namely, Mara Salvatrucha 13, or MS 13, a large street gang with roots in Central America. According to numerous articles from Newsweek and the New Republic, among others, the gang formed in Los Angeles as a way to protect Salvadoran immigrants from Mexican gangs. It has since fanned out across the United States, and diversified into narcotics, immigrant smuggling and other felonious activities. It has tens of thousands of members in several Central American countries. It is also incredibly nasty in its disposition, according to the

New Republic, which called it "the most dangerous gang in America." It's star appears to be rising. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, several of its members have been convicted under the RICO act, a piece of federal legislation reserved for organized criminal enterprises.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.alamogordonews.com/news/ci_4752240

29. WA: Deputy's killer was part of gang (Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 4 Dec 2006)

The man who apparently shot and killed a King County sheriff's deputy Saturday was a member of a violent Seattle gang and was on active supervision by the state Department of Corrections. Raymond O. Porter, 23, was killed by other deputies after he shot Deputy Steve Cox in the back room of a White Center home early Saturday. It is the third time in recent months that a law enforcement officer in the Seattle area has died at the hands of a convicted felon under state Department of Corrections supervision.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/294611_shooting04.html

NARCO TRAFFICKING

30. CA: Former notorious drug lord gunned down (Inside Bay Area, 3 Dec 2006)

OAKLAND - Rudolph "Rudy" Henderson, who at one time was considered one of Oakland's most powerful narcotics dealers, was shot to death Saturday, while sitting in a vehicle outside a North Oakland restaurant. Two other people with him were not injured, police said. They drove him to Alta Bates hospital in Berkeley, where he died at 4:43 p.m. He was 57. The slaying came eight months after Henderson's son, Rudolph Henderson Jr., 25, was shot to death in a car-jacking in East Oakland. At this point, police do not believe the killings are connected. The shooting of Rudy Henderson Sr. occurred about 5 p.m. in the 800 block of 60th Street.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.insidebayarea.com/argus/localnews/ci_4764748

31. FL: Florida 'Drug Tourism' Raising Concerns (CBS4, 3 Dec 2006)

FT. LAUDERDALE - Most tourists come to Florida for the sun, the sand, and the theme parks, but a new attraction has some officials worried about a seamier side of Florida's tourist trade. Officials are concerned about a wave of out-of-state drug dealers and addicts who travel long distances to visit Florida pain clinics. National drug officials say these people target the state because its lax oversight of prescription drugs makes getting pills such as Oxycodone and Percocet easier. Officials believe drug dealers are traveling to the state, getting easy prescriptions, and then taking the drugs back home to sell. The problem was noted in a national drug threat assessment released November 15th by the Justice Department. The issue also has popped up in Florida courtrooms. More than two dozen people from Kentucky who drove to see doctors in Palm Beach County and Fort Lauderdale have been arrested.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://cbs4.com/topstories/local_story_337152439.html

32. GA: Authorities seize 3 pounds suspected cocaine, arrest 5 (Gainesville Times, 2 Dec 2006)

Hall County law enforcement officers made another big drug bust Thursday night, arresting five people and seizing more than three pounds of suspected cocaine in an undercover sting operation. Lt. Scott Ware, commander of the Hall County Multi-Agency Narcotics Squad, said information developed by the Gainesville-Hall County Gang Task Force helped lead to the arrests. The week-long investigation culminated in a meeting for a drug buy at the Publix supermarket parking lot on Golden Parkway at 6 p.m. Thursday. One Ford Explorer pulled up with a "sample" of the suspected cocaine for undercover officers to try, Ware said. A second Ford Explorer arrived a short time later with the bulk of the suspected cocaine, packaged in two "blocks." A small amount of suspected crack cocaine was also seized. Authorities placed the street value of the drugs at \$154,000.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/stories/20061202/localnews/141253.shtml>

33. KY: Police arrest man with 270 grams of cocaine (Richmond Register, 5 Dec 2006)

A 26-year-old Waco man was arrested Saturday after allegedly trying to throw about 270 grams of cocaine while running from police. Joshua Reynolds of the 1200 block of College Hill Road was charged with first-degree trafficking in a controlled substance and disorderly conduct. The Richmond Police Department's Street Crimes Unit observed on Saturday what appeared to be a drug deal in the area of Bonanza Drive. When the officers approached and identified themselves, Reynolds allegedly fled on foot while suspects in a vehicle drove off.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?V20E42F4E>

34. MA: High bail for 5 suspects - Drug ring allegedly supplied cocaine to Maine (The Telegram, 2 Dec 2006)

WORCESTER - Bail was set yesterday for five men charged in a drug investigation that resulted in police seizing about four kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated \$400,000. The suspects were arrested Thursday night in connection with a drug probe by the Worcester vice squad and federal Drug Enforcement Administration that began several weeks ago and led to the issuance of search warrants for three locations in the city. Each suspect was charged with offenses that included trafficking in more than 200 grams of cocaine, which carries a minimum mandatory sentence of 15 years in state prison. Investigators said the five men were part of a drug ring that stored large quantities of cocaine in Worcester for distribution in the state of Maine.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?O37D22F4E>

35. NV: 5 suspected of trafficking meth, cocaine in Carson (Reno Gazette-Journal, 3 Dec 2006)

Five people were arrested on suspicion of trafficking methamphetamine and cocaine in Carson City on National Methamphetamine Awareness Day. Seized in raids Thursday were 412 grams of meth valued at \$45,000 and 80 grams of cocaine valued at \$8,000,

Nevada Department of Public Safety officials said. Detectives from the department's Public Safety Tri-Net Narcotics Task Force culminated a two-month investigation with the arrests.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?S16D21F4E>

36. NY: 3 kilos of cocaine seized (The Journal News, 5 Dec 2006)

MOUNT VERNON - Three kilos of cocaine, \$18,000 in cash and a stun gun were recovered after two people under surveillance were arrested when they drove across the border between Yonkers and Mount Vernon Friday night, police said. Mount Vernon Police Commissioner David Chong said the two suspects had been under investigation by a team of investigators from the city's Police Department and the Westchester County District Attorney's Office Narcotics Initiative.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?Z21E21F4E>

37. NY: International Cocaine Consumption: New York Blows away the Competition (Shared Responsibility, 4 Dec 2006)

Researchers have been scouring rivers in Europe and the US for traces of cocaine consumption. The result: Cocaine use is probably much greater than previously assumed -- and New Yorkers are the biggest coke-heads of all.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.sharedresponsibility.gov.co/?idcategoria=612>

38. NC: Third Suspect Captured In \$20 Million Cocaine Bust (The Daily Record, 5 Dec 2006)

Sampson County special agents arrested a third suspect in connection to a seizure of 200 kilograms of cocaine that took place in January of this year. The street value of the cocaine seized was \$20 million. Jose Alfredo Jiminez Alvarado, 36, was taken into custody on federal charges of conspiracy to distribute and possess more than 5 kilograms of cocaine and possession with intent to distribute more than 5 kilograms of cocaine. The arrest was part of an ongoing investigation by the Special Investigations Division of the Sampson County Sheriff's Office.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?B22E32F4E>

39. SC: Columbia man charged in cocaine bust (The State.com, 1 Dec 2006)

A Columbia man was arrested this week in a major cocaine bust by the Richland County Sheriff's Department. Andrew David Lanier, 44, was arrested early Monday morning after deputies got a tip that cocaine was going to be delivered to a Farrow Road location, according to a news release from the department. Lanier, of Hampton Trace Lane, was arrested around 1:30 a.m. after officers set up surveillance in a parking lot in the 5600 block of Farrow Road, according to an incident report. When an officer approached the car, Lanier stepped out and volunteered that illegal drugs were in the car, the report said. A search of the car turned up four plastic bags filled with a white powdered substance. It

was determined to be what the sheriff's department estimated to be \$250,000 worth of cocaine.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.thestate.com/mld/thestate/news/breaking_news/16141757.htm

40. TX: Officers seize millions worth of marijuana, cocaine (AP, 4 Dec 2006)

PHARR, Texas - Officials working the Pharr international bridge found \$1.6 million worth of cocaine hidden in a Mercedes Benz and \$2.8 million worth of marijuana amid a load of cactus and coriander, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection said Monday. The cocaine was seized Saturday afternoon after Customs officers saw something suspicious in the undercarriage of the car. A density meter showed oddities in the car's floor area, and a drug-sniffing dog helped locate a secret compartment under the front passenger's seat, authorities said. The officers found 19 packages of cocaine weighing about 49 pounds. The driver and owner of the car, 39-year-old Armando De Los Reyes of Monterrey, Mexico, was in federal custody Monday pending a court appearance on drug charges.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/news/state/16163451.htm>

41. VA: Six plead guilty in Charlottesville cocaine ring (Media General News Service, 4 Dec 2006)

CHARLOTTESVILLE - Six men accused of taking part in a cocaine-dealing ring have all pleaded guilty and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors to avoid notoriously steep federal prison sentences.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?N34D54F4E>

42. WI: Two charged after agents seize cocaine, marijuana (Green Bay Press Gazette, 2 Dec 2006)

Brown County narcotics agents, working with state and federal investigators, seized four kilograms of cocaine and several pounds of marijuana after serving search warrants on the homes of two Brown County men. Homero Hernandez, 35, of Green Bay, and Felipe DeJesus Lara-Diaz, 21, of Bellevue were arrested Nov. 17 and have been charged in U.S. District Court with conspiracy to deliver cocaine and marijuana. The case was an ongoing probe by the Brown County Drug Task Force, the FBI and state narcotics agents. The drugs allegedly were trafficked from the Menominee Indian Reservation to Brown County.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?F25D11F4E>

43. Good and bad news on meth - A lack of access has led to decrease in home-grown labs (The Leaf-Chronicle, 3 Dec 2006)

Which do you want first — the good news or the bad news concerning methamphetamines in Tennessee? Under the good news, the number of meth labs in the state has decreased. The work of the 7-year-old Tennessee Methamphetamine Task Force and laws restricting the sale of nonprescription drugs with ingredients used to make meth

has put a dent in the ability of meth labs to do their thing here. In October 2005, Tennessee was one of the national leaders, with 80 meth labs seized. That dropped to 55 in October of this year. As a side note, pharmacies also have reported a drop in cold medicine sales for those products containing pseudoephedrine because customers don't want the paperwork and ID hassle associated with buying the medicine. More good news is that number of children placed in state Department of Children's Services custody because of meth is down from 750 in 2004 to 300 in the past year. This past week, the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children met in Nashville to develop more strategies for protecting children who are impacted by all kinds of drug use.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?L3F651F4E>

44. Canada: Cocaine use on the rise in northern Manitoba (CBC News, 4 Dec 2006)

RCMP and addictions officials in northern Manitoba say they're dealing with a rapid rise in cocaine use and trafficking this year, but also an increase in the number of people seeking help for their addiction. The city of Thompson has become a lucrative market for both rock and powdered cocaine, RCMP say. Sgt. Tyler Bates said officers have made a record number of cocaine seizures this year. "We've seized three kilograms of cocaine approximately this year, with [a] local street value of approximately anywhere in the vicinity of \$800,000 to \$900,000," Bates said. Within a three-week span in November, police made two of their largest cocaine seizures in Thompson, worth about \$650,000 in street value.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/manitoba/story/2006/12/04/north-cocaine.html>

45. Colombian police seize over 1 ton of cocaine bound for Mexico (People's Daily Online, 5 Dec 2006)

Colombian police on Monday seized 1.029 tons of cocaine, which was about to be sent to Mexico from Buenaventura, Colombia's main Pacific coast port, operation director General Luis Alberto Gomez said. The cocaine was found in a container of wet leather on its way to the Mexican port of Manzanillo. The police also arrested one person, who has been now transferred to the attorney general. Police have started focusing on Buenaventura in the southeastern department of Valle del Cauca, as the city shows increasing signs of drug trafficking.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://english.people.com.cn/200612/05/eng20061205_328548.html

46. Colombian drug czar's brother arrested on cocaine charge (AP, 4 Dec 2006)

BOGOTA, Colombia - Colombia's drug czar said police arrested his brother over the weekend with six grams (0.2 ounces) of cocaine. Carlos Albornoz, head of the National Drug Directorate responsible for Colombia's drug-control policies, said in a news conference Sunday his brother Ivan Albornoz was arrested shortly after buying the drugs Saturday night in southern Bogota. The anti-drug official said President Alvaro Uribe asked him to continue in his job. "My family and myself are obligated to confront a situation that we never foresaw," said Albornoz, a former Senator. "The curse of drugs, which I've dedicated myself to combat aggressively, is among us." Albornoz said he was

unaware of his brother's drug use and expected him to be treated with the same severity as any other Colombian citizen.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/americas/12/04/colombia.drugs.ap/>

47. North Korea and Narcotrafficking (Congressional Research Service Report)

The apparent involvement of the North Korean government in drug trafficking and the implications of such activity for U.S. policy are the subject of a newly updated report from the Congressional Research Service (first reported by U.S. News and World Report). See "Drug Trafficking and North Korea: Issues for U.S. Policy," updated November 27, 2006

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32167.pdf>

48. Australian jailed in NZ over cocaine haul (Sidney Morning Herald, 5 Dec 2006)

An Australian man has been jailed for seven years for trying to take \$NZ300,000 (\$263,000) worth of liquid cocaine, which his brother had brought into New Zealand from Chile, to Australia. Sergio Ivan Seguel, 43, a gardener from Sydney, had pleaded guilty to charges of importing cocaine and attempting to export it to Australia in February. He received the same sentence in the High Court in Auckland today as his brother Dario Alexander Seguel, 41, who was sentenced in August. The pair were arrested at Auckland International Airport on February 15 after being found with 546 grams of liquid cocaine of 23 per cent purity.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?K53E15F4E>

CYBERTHREAT & THEFT

49. FBI Computer Funding Is Uncertain (Washington Post, 05 Dec 2006)

The Justice Department's inspector general warned yesterday that funding for the FBI's new Sentinel computer system is uncertain and that the program's final price tag could exceed its \$425 million budget. A 112-page audit by Inspector General Glenn A. Fine said that a current White House budget request includes only \$100 million for Sentinel in fiscal 2007, although the FBI says it needs \$57 million more to keep it going.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://masl.to/?A26912F4E>

50. Romanian Charged Over NASA Hacking (Agence France-Presse, 2 Dec 2006)

Bucharest - A 26-year-old Romanian man has been charged with hacking into the computers of the NASA space agency, police in Bucharest said on Saturday. Victor Faur, from Arad in western Romania, is accused by authorities in the United States of causing NASA damages amounting to 1.3 million dollars (almost 1 million euros). The US alerted Romanian police in July to the fact that the security of NASA's servers had been breached by an unknown person in Romania.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Romanian_Charged_Over_NASA_Hacking_999.html

51. Hackers Attack Naval War College Network (AP, 05 Dec 2006)

Hackers attacked the computer network at the Naval War College in Newport, taking down the school's network for more than two weeks, including some e-mail services and the college's Web site. The Navy Cyber Defense Operations Command in Norfolk, Va., detected the intrusion around Nov. 16 and took the system offline, spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Doug Gabos said. He said the unclassified network was used by students. Military spokesmen would not give an estimate on when the school's Web site, <http://www.nwc.navy.mil>, will be back up. The Naval War College bills itself as the Navy's leading center of strategic thought and national security policy. Investigators were trying to determine the extent of the intrusion, Gabos said. They planned to upgrade firewalls and make other unspecified improvements.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.wtopnews.com/?nid=104&sid=996275>

52. New rules compel firms to track e-mails (AP, 1 Dec 2006)

U.S. companies will need to keep track of all the e-mails, instant messages and other electronic documents generated by their employees thanks to new federal rules that go into effect Friday, legal experts say. The rules, approved by the Supreme Court in April, require companies and other entities involved in federal litigation to produce "electronically stored information" as part of the discovery process, when evidence is shared by both sides before a trial. The change makes it more important for companies to know what electronic information they have and where. Under the new rules, an information technology employee who routinely copies over a backup computer tape could be committing the equivalent of "virtual shredding," said Alvin F. Lindsay, a partner at Hogan & Hartson LLP and expert on technology and litigation.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20061201/ap_on_hi_te/storing_e_mails&printer=1

TECHNOLOGY

53. Missile Defense For Commercial Planes Near (AirWise, 5 Dec 2006)

Systems to protect commercial planes from shoulder-fired missiles are almost ready but airlines and the US government may not start using them unless the public perceives an imminent threat, executives at two defense manufacturers said on Monday. Airlines must have the technology to respond to missile threats -- even if they seem unlikely today -- said Walt Havenstein, who takes over as chief of BAE Systems in the United States on January 1. "If somebody shoots a missile at one of our airplanes coming in off the Chesapeake Bay, and someone says 'Oh, that's what it was,' then life changes," Havenstein said at the Reuters Aerospace and Defense Summit in Washington. Jim Pitts, president of the electronic systems unit at US defense contractor Northrop Grumman, echoed the notion that implementation would be far more likely if the traveling public actually feared missile attacks on planes.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1165317251.html>

RESOURCES

54. NRC Releases Plan for Continued mission-Essential Operations During An Avian Flu Pandemic (SOPnewswire, 3 Dec 2006)

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has released its 90-page plan outlining how the agency would maintain mission-essential and supporting functions during a possible flu pandemic that may cause staff absenteeism of 40 percent or more. The plan says the NRC would systematically “shed” lower priority work and take certain action ahead of time to better support staff during a pandemic, including enhanced telecommunications and stocking of hygiene supplies. The pandemic plan complements the agency’s existing Continuity of Operations Plan and reflects considerations provided by the Department of Homeland Security pandemic planning guidelines. “This is a plan that we hope we never have to implement,” said NRC Commissioner Jeffrey Merrifield, who is taking a lead role in the review of the planning effort. “But it is prudent to plan ahead and anticipate what actions might be needed and what prioritization of activities must be done in order for the NRC to maintain its essential, core mission of protecting public health and safety.”

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.thesop.org/index.php?id=3218>

The public portion of the pandemic plan will be available on the NRC Web site at:

<http://masl.to/?N20711F4E>

55. RMS Publishes Assessment of Future Flood Risk in New Orleans (PRNewswire, 4 Dec 2006)

NEWARK, Calif. - Risk Management Solutions (RMS) today released an extensive report on the future flood risk faced by the city of New Orleans due to hurricane storm surges. The report, Flood Risk in New Orleans: Implications for Future Management and Insurability, outlines the ongoing threat of flood risk due to future hurricane storm surges and considers the role of insurance, the planning process, and the government in providing physical and economic protection so those living and investing in the city can have confidence that the risk is being effectively managed. In framing the debate for New Orleans' future, the report signals to those who hold a stake in the future of New Orleans, including the policy makers who are responsible for its safety and prosperity, that they must plan for a future that will undoubtedly be more hazardous than in the past. The report concludes that the threat of flooding in the city continues to increase due to a combination of three physical temporal factors.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/061204/nym218.html?.v=50>

FULL REPORTS

56. Statement by Secretary Spellings on the Release of Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2006 (US Dept of Education, 4 Dec 2006)

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings today issued the following statement on the release of Indicators of School Crime and Safety, a cooperative effort by the Departments of Justice and Education:

For our children to learn, our schools must be safe. All American parents want to know they are sending their children to a safe learning environment. And our children deserve schools in which they don't have to be afraid of violence and can focus on their studies.

While violent crime rates in our schools are about half the levels of the early 1990s, a recent series of tragic shootings have led us to reexamine and redouble our efforts. This fall, I joined Attorney General Gonzales in leading President Bush's Conference on School Safety. We brought together law enforcement, school officials and community experts to share effective strategies and emphasize what all of us can do – including students – to prevent school violence. I also have appointed the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Advisory Committee, which will advise me on federal, state and local programs designed to create safe, drug-free learning environments, and on issues related to crisis planning for our schools.

The annual Indicators of School Crime and Safety provides an update to monitor our progress towards making schools safer. While this year's report shows that crime rates have continued to decline, even one incident is too many. This report will help school officials and law enforcement better focus their resources and efforts to ensure our schools are safe and our students protected.

The federal government supports local efforts to improve school safety by providing assistance and lending expertise, along with \$535 million this year to fund programs directly related to school safety. Other funding measures include:

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More than \$1 billion through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant program since the grant was first awarded in 1999.

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\$115 million over the past four years through the Department of Education's Emergency Response & Crisis Management grant program to improve and expand upon school crisis response plans, including \$26 million this year for the School Emergency Preparedness Initiative to help elementary and secondary schools plan and prepare for threats, including shootings and gang-related activity.

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Through a partnership with the Secret Service, funding to train 74,000 local education and law enforcement personnel in threat assessment.

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Under Project SERV (School Emergency Response to Violence), \$24 million since 2001 for schools impacted by violence to restore their learning environment.

To view the full report *Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2006* please visit:
CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007003>

57. United States Intensifies Fight Against Counterfeit Drugs - Tougher trademark laws considered, say Justice officials (By Nadine Siak, USINFO Staff Writer, 1 Dec 2006)

Washington - The United States government is expanding its efforts to combat the rising threat posed by dangerous counterfeit drugs entering global markets, say U.S. Department of Justice officials.

More than 10 percent of the drugs sold around the world today are counterfeit, according to the World Health Organization, and the problem is growing.

“We view it as serious business,” Eugene Thiorlf told an audience in Taiwan via digital videoconference November 28. Thiorlf is director of the U.S. Department of Justice office that assists the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in prosecuting counterfeiters.

The removal of counterfeit drugs from the marketplace is “critical,” he said.

“Maintaining the confidence of the American public or the public in Taiwan that the products that they are taking are, in fact, going to help them, and are safe and effective -- it is something that must be maintained,” Thiorlf said.

“The drug supply in the United States remains safe, but we believe [there are] increasingly sophisticated and challenging threats from those who want to take advantage of the American market,” Thiorlf said. “Organizations and individuals who peddle these fake medicines put unsuspecting patients at risk -- not only in the United States, but around the world.”

Counterfeit drugs often look like the authentic product, but might not contain any of the active (therapeutic) ingredients, might contain too much of the active ingredients, might contain too little of the active ingredients, or might contain contaminants that are potentially dangerous to the consumer’s health.

Although all counterfeit products are violations of someone’s intellectual property rights (IPR), John Zacharia, an IPR attorney with the Department of Justice, told the conference participants that most counterfeit drug cases are prosecuted under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act rather than as trademark violations.

“Unlike, for example, counterfeit luxury items ... where the actual Gucci brand or Nike brand matters,” Zacharia explained, “with counterfeit drugs, most of the time, the purchasers don't care if the [trade]mark is on it, they just want the drug. So the counterfeiters know this, and so they on purpose don't usually use the mark.”

If counterfeiters are caught, penalties are milder under the Cosmetic Act. The maximum criminal penalty under trademark law is 10 years in prison compared with three years under the cosmetic law.

In March, however, the U.S. Congress changed trademark law “to make it a little easier to show trafficking” in counterfeit drugs, he continued. This modification “broadens the scope of what we can prosecute,” making the statute easier to apply, Zacharia said. (See [related article](#).)

Both officials mentioned that there are proposals before the U.S. Congress to modify the criminal statute on trademarks in order to make penalty for cases of counterfeit pharmaceutical trademarks more severe -- higher than the current 10 year maximum for trademark infringements in general.

In addition, a new FDA regulation that went into effect in November requires companies that sell drugs in the United States to show proof of where the drug was manufactured.

“It is called a ‘pedigree,’” Thirolf said. “It would be like showing that you have evidence that you have a drug that came from the manufacturer.”

See also "[Public Safety Jeopardized by Chinese Counterfeiters, Experts Say](#)."

For more information on U.S. policy, see [Protecting Intellectual Property Rights](#).

More information on counterfeit drugs is available on the [U.S. Department of Justice, Food and Drug Administration](#) and [World Health Organization](#) Web sites.

(USINFO is produced by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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