



## NEWS BRIEFS

### Disaster Spawns Fraud

The FBI has issued a reminder to Internet users to be cautious of online appeals for financial assistance in the wake of the Haitian earthquake. It seems almost unthinkable that someone would use such an awful tragedy for their own personal gain, but past disasters have prompted individuals with criminal intent to solicit contributions while posing as a charity. The FBI recommends the following.

- Do not respond to any unsolicited (spam) incoming e-mails, including clicking links contained within those messages.
- Be skeptical of individuals representing themselves as surviving victims or officials asking for donations via e-mail or social networking sites.
- Verify the legitimacy of nonprofit organizations by utilizing various Internet-based resources that may assist in confirming the group's existence and its nonprofit status rather than following a purported link to the site.
- Be cautious of e-mails that claim to show pictures of the disaster areas in attached files because the files may contain viruses. Only open attachments from known senders.
- Make contributions directly to known organizations rather than relying on others to make the donation on your behalf to ensure contributions are received and used for intended purposes.
- Do not give your personal or financial information to anyone who solicits contributions: Providing such information may compromise your identity and make you vulnerable to identity theft.

Don't be discouraged, though, because there are plenty of real charities doing amazing work in Haiti right now who could use your assistance.

### Harvard Report Warns of WMD Dangers

Rolf Mowatt-Larssenn, a former CIA officer now serving as a senior fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government, released a report on Monday detailing al-Qaida's efforts to obtain and use chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons between 1988 and 2003. Mowatt-Larssenn makes it clear in his report that al-Qaida would not hesitate to launch attacks that could kill thousands or hundreds of thousands of Americans. However, the report, which is entitled "Al Qaeda Weapons of Mass Destruction Threat: Hype or Reality," does not answer the question of whether the fact that such attacks have not occurred is the result of a decision by al-Qaida not to move forward with devastating terrorist plots or effective counterterrorism measures. Nevertheless, the possibility that al-Qaida could use nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction is real, said Professor Graham Allison, the head of the Belfer Center and the author of the report's introduction. He added that recognizing this threat is the first step in developing a coherent strategy to prevent massive terrorist attacks from taking place.

### Suspected Yemen Militants could be Linked to American Ex-Convicts

As many as 36 Americans who became Muslims while in U.S. prisons traveled to Yemen over the past year, possibly to be trained by al-Qaida according to a report released by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. According to the report, which was released ahead of a hearing on the growing threat from al-Qaida in Yemen, the former convicts traveled to the impoverished Arabian peninsula nation under the pretense of studying Arabic. After they arrived, the ex-convicts disappeared and are believed to have traveled to al-Qaida training camps in ungoverned sections of Yemen, the report said. The report also noted that the trips by the ex-convicts to Yemen are just one piece of evidence that al-Qaida is increasingly trying to recruit American residents and citizens in Yemen, Somalia, and the U.S. In addition, the report said that al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, the group that is believed to be responsible for the failed attempt to bomb Northwest Airlines Flight 253 late last month, has become a dangerous new threat to the U.S. after being on the verge of collapse a couple of years ago. U.S. counterterrorism officials say that they are concerned about the report's findings, since they seem to show that al-Qaida has broadened its recruitment efforts in Yemen to attract "nontraditional followers" who can carry out more ambitious terrorist plots. Some are also concerned that those who traveled to Yemen to receive terrorist training may more easily enter the U.S. than foreigners.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Driving at Night

According to the National Safety Council, traffic death rates are three times greater at night than during the day. Yet many of us are unaware of night driving's special hazards or don't know effective ways to deal with them. Ninety percent of a driver's reaction depends on vision, depth perception, color recognition, and peripheral vision, all of which are compromised after sundown. Older drivers have even greater difficulties seeing at night. A 50-year-old driver may need twice as much light to see as well as a 30-year old. Another factor adding danger to night driving is fatigue. Drowsiness makes driving more difficult by dulling concentration and slowing reaction time. Alcohol is a leading factor in fatal traffic crashes, playing a part in about half of all motor vehicle-related deaths. That makes weekend nights more dangerous. More fatal crashes take place on weekend nights than at any other time in the week.

The National Safety Council recommends these effective measures to minimize these after-dark dangers by preparing your car and following special guidelines while you drive.

- Prepare your car for night driving. Keep headlights, tail lights, signal lights and windows (inside and out) clean.
- Have your headlights properly aimed. Misaligned headlights blind other drivers and reduce your ability to see the road.
- Don't drink and drive. Not only does alcohol severely impair your driving ability, it also acts as a depressant. Just one drink can induce fatigue.
- Avoid smoking when you drive. Smoke's nicotine and carbon monoxide hamper night vision.
- If there is any doubt, turn your headlights on. Lights will not help you see better in early twilight, but they'll make it easier for other drivers to see you. Being seen is as important as seeing.
- Reduce your speed and increase your following distances. It is more difficult to judge other vehicle's speeds and distances at night.
- When following another vehicle, keep your headlights on low beams so you don't blind the driver ahead of you.
- If an oncoming vehicle doesn't lower beams from high to low, avoid glare by watching the right edge of the road and using it as a steering guide.
- Make frequent stops for light snacks and exercise. If you're too tired to drive, stop and get rest.

Observe night driving safety as soon as the sun goes down. Twilight is one of the most difficult times to drive, because your eyes are constantly changing to adapt to the growing darkness.

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