



PROPHETIC TIMES

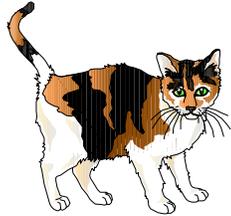
WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

08 MAY 2004

INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS WARN OF ACCELERATION IN ANIMAL-TO-HUMAN DISEASE

May 5, 2004 Agence France Presse reported: "International experts warned that the emergence of new diseases that are passed from animals to humans, such as avian flu, was accelerating and they were ill-equipped to counter the trend. Their conclusions came at the end of a three-day meeting of scientists dealing with animal and human health at the World Health Organisation, which examined the diseases that can jump the species barrier, known as zoonoses.



"Their current upward trend is likely to continue," Francois-Xavier Meslin of the WHO told journalists. "The number of zoonotic diseases is very large and those that emerge as public health problems in both the developed and developing world are increasing continuously," Meslin, a specialist on zoonoses, said.

The scientists warned that there was a lack of cooperation between animal and human health sectors that hampered efforts to prevent new diseases emerging in humans. They also urged governments to take action to strengthen basic surveillance, research and treatment facilities throughout the world.

WHO, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) were issuing a "joint message" to "raise political awareness and support" for underfunded veterinary and public health services, Meslin said.

Asia was hit by widespread outbreaks of bird flu at the end of 2003 and earlier this year, which led to the deaths of at least 23 people in Vietnam and Thailand. Millions of chickens and ducks were also culled in a bid to halt the spread of the disease, which has only started to infect humans in a virulent form in recent years.

Zoonoses include diseases that are passed on by contact between animals and humans, such as bird flu, ebola, or mosquito-borne parasitic diseases like leishmaniasis.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS -- which affected large parts of Asia last year -- is regarded as a "potential" zoonosis because scientists have not yet been able to confirm that it emerged from civet cats or market animals in southern China.

Human behaviour was a key factor driving the emergence of the diseases, the scientists said in a statement which listed pet ownership, global air travel, "food preference" and poverty..."

NORTH DEPLOYS NEW 4,000KM RANGE MISSILES

May 5, 2004 The Chosun libo reported: "North Korea has begun work on deploying intermediate range ballistic missiles (with ranges of 3,000~4,000km) it developed last year, building underground bases at two sites. This is much sooner than South Korean and American military authorities had expected.

A high ranking government source said Tuesday that, "North Korea is in the middle of building two underground missile sites in Yangdok County, South Pyongan Province and Sangnam-ni, Hochon County, North Hamgyeong Province. Construction is about 70 to 80 percent complete."

The source added, "In particular, U.S. spy satellites have discovered about 10 of the newly designed IRBMs and mobile launchers at the two sites between last year and the beginning of this year... We presume these bases to be for a new kind of ballistic missile, not Rodong 1's or Scud's."

Of the ranges of missiles currently deployed in North Korea, the Rodong 1 has the longest at 1,300 km -- capable of hitting most anywhere in Japan. The Taepodong 1, developed in 1998 and with a range of 1,600~2,200 km, has yet to be deployed.

The source said the threat posed by the new missile, which can reach Okinawa, Gwam and the vicinity of Hawaii, is part of the background behind the hastened development by the U.S. of its missile defense plans. The new missile, unlike the Taepodong 1 that is launched from a fixed site, is loaded onto a mobile missile launch vehicle. It is, therefore, highly mobile.

The missile is presumed to be a development on the Soviet SS-N-6 sub-launched ballistic missile; it was originally expected to be revealed during last year's Sept. 9 Foundation Day parades, but the 10 missiles and five launchers were simply brought to Mirim Airbase -- the preparation site for the parades -- and not featured in the celebrations.

The missiles are 12 meters long and 1.5 wide -- shorter than both the Rodong 1 (15 meters) and Taepodong 1 (23 meters), but have a much longer range and are evaluated as a technically advanced type.

Authorities feel that former Soviet engineers either directly participated in the development of the missile, the program of which began in the early 90s and was first confirmed by South Korean and U.S. intelligence in 2000, or at the very least Russian technology applied.”

US GROUP URGES EUROPE TO TIGHTEN EFFORTS TO SECURE NUCLEAR FACILITIES IN FORMER SOVIET UNION

May 4, 2004 The Voice of America reported: “A leading U.S. research institute and a former U.S. senator have used a computer exercise to try to convince European officials that Europe could be threatened by a terrorist attack with nuclear weapons, if western countries do not tighten efforts to secure nuclear facilities in the former Soviet Union.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based policy research organization, and former Senator Sam Nunn, showed during a brainstorming session with top European Union and NATO officials what could happen, if the al-Qaida terrorist group were able to acquire highly enriched uranium from civilian research reactors in the former Soviet Union.

How about an attack with a crude nuclear bomb at NATO headquarters in Brussels, which would immediately kill 40,000 people, overwhelm hospitals with hundreds-of-thousands of injured, spread panic throughout Europe and plunge the world economy into turmoil?

The scenario is fictitious, but is based on documented evidence of al-Qaida efforts to get its hands on highly enriched uranium, and of contacts between the organization's operatives and Pakistani weapons scientists.

Mr. Nunn said preventing al-Qaida from obtaining weapons-grade nuclear material is the best way to stop the group from building such a bomb. "It is well within al-Qaida's operational capabilities to recruit the technical expertise needed to build a crude nuclear device. The hard part is getting the nuclear material, but we do not make it hard enough," he said.

Mr. Nunn, who sponsored a \$10 billion program in the U.S. Senate to destroy and safeguard weapons of mass destruction in Russia and other former Soviet republics in 1991, says at least 60 percent of those facilities still need to be adequately secured...”

BIOMETRIC IDs OK WITH U.K.

April 30, 2004 Wired News reported: “About 80 percent of 1,000 British adults recently surveyed say they want a biometric identification card, citing concerns about illegal immigration and identity theft. The survey by Market & Opinion Research International for Detica, a U.K. computer-consulting company, also found that an equal number would be "happy to carry the card at all times," though half wouldn't pay for it.



Those findings came amid a busy week for biometrics in Britain. The Home Secretary has introduced legislation to implement a centralized "national identity register" database by 2010. A family of national identity cards -- including driver's licenses and passports -- could appear by 2007, then cover 80 percent of the "economically active" population by 2010, with cards becoming compulsory. Observers predict the legislation will be voted on by next year. The overall cost is estimated to be 3.1 billion pounds (\$5.5 billion) -- provided the rollout goes

smoothly.

The United Kingdom Passport Service also began a six-month biometric passport trial this week with 10,000 volunteers, putting facial, iris and fingerprint scanning and recognition technology through real-world testing. The passport service plans to implement biometric passport technology by the middle of 2005.

Though the survey shows that most Britons back national identity cards, there's a wrinkle: Half said they won't pay for it, and few were very familiar with the cards. Contrast that with the government's plan to charge 35 pounds for an identity card good for 10 years, or 77 pounds for a card including passport, for every family member 16 to 80 years old.

Concerns about Big Brother? Try "bumbling brother," with 58 percent of surveyed Britons predicting the government won't be able to roll out new ID cards smoothly, and one-third saying their stored information won't be safe. Still, most support such cards, principally to tackle illegal immigration and identity theft. The latter costs the United Kingdom 1.3 billion pounds per year...”