

U.S. finds more evidence that links al-Qaida to Kenya attacks

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — U.S. suspicions that al-Qaida was behind last week's terrorist attacks in Kenya grew stronger after counterterrorism officials deemed a claim of responsibility credible and tied missiles used in the attack to an attempted hit on a military plane in May.

U.S. authorities are treating the claim as authentic, officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The claim, posted on the Web site www.azfalrasas.com, is attributed to "The Political Office of al-Qaida Jihad Organization."

The statement called Thursday's attacks in Mombasa — on an airliner and a hotel, both full of Israelis — a Ramadan greeting to the Palestinian people and referred to al-Qaida's deadly bombings in 1998 against U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

"At the same place where the 'Jewish Crusader coalition' was hit four years ago ... here the fighters of al-Qaida came back once again to strike heavily against that evil coalition. But this

time, it was against Jews," the statement said.

In the attacks, two missiles were launched at an Israeli charter airliner just after it took off from Mombasa for Tel Aviv, Israel, with 261 passengers and 10 crew members on board. Both missed. The Arkia Airlines Boeing 757 landed safely at its destination.

About the same time, a vehicle bomb exploded at an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, killing 10 Kenyans, three Israelis and the three bombers. Kenyan officials have detained at least 12 people.

The Internet statement pledged to continue operations, saying, "It is a war between faith and the infidel, between truth and fallacy, between justice and injustice."

Someone listing an address in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, registered the Internet address for the site, which is published on computers in Texas, Internet records show.

Two anti-aircraft missile launchers recovered after the failed attack on the Israeli airliner are from the same production batch as one fired in May by an al-Qaida operative in Saudi Arabia at a U.S.

military plane, officials said.

That suggests another al-Qaida link to the Kenya attacks, because the portable heat-seeking missiles probably were obtained as a group, the officials said.

The U.S. government has obtained other, unspecified information that suggests Osama bin Laden's organization was responsible, they said.

U.S. officials have also suggested an affiliated Islamic extremist network from Somalia, al-Itihaad al-Islamiya, may have played a role.

To make the missile connection, investigators compared serial numbers on the two discarded launchers found with the number on the launch tube recovered outside Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia seven months ago. The numbers were close, officials said.

Thousands of this class of missile, known in Western countries as the SA-7 Grail, have been produced in Russia, Eastern Europe, China, Yugoslavia, Egypt and elsewhere. They chase the heat produced by an airplane engine and explode but are effective only while the target plane is flying low and slow.

STATE

S.C. man gets 25 years for assault

CHARLESTON (AP) — A convicted sex offender has been sentenced to 25 years in prison after he admitted he forced a teenager to fondle him as she walked to the bus stop.

Alex White, 34, of North Charleston, pleaded guilty to Monday to assault with intent to commit criminal sexual conduct, prosecutor Scarlett Wilson said.

White grabbed the teen in August 2001 and forced her to fondle him at a nearby mobile home park, Wilson said.

When she tried to run away, the man threatened to break her neck. He eventually let her go after she screamed when a police cruiser drove by, according to an arrest warrant.

White is a registered sex offender in South Carolina who has three convictions for indecent exposure and one for failing to register as a sex offender.

NATION

Ship passengers try to avoid bug

ABOARD THE FASCINATION (AP) — The cruise ship Fascination steamed toward Key West and Mexico on Tuesday, with passengers taking precautions to avoid catching the disease that sickened nearly 200 people on the ship's last voyage.

Marek Biela, 36, of Marlboro, Mass., said he was washing his hands frequently, one of the recommendations Carnival Cruise Lines gave to passengers when they boarded Monday at Miami. But Biela was thinking more about what he would do during a day trip at Key West.

"The worst case is you can get sick for a day or two," he said. "If this was a life-threatening disease, I wouldn't get on the boat."

The ship left Miami late Monday on a cruise that also stops in Cozumel, Mexico.

WORLD

Tear gas escalates Venezuela strike

CARACAS, VENEZUELA (AP) — National guard troops atop armored vehicles fired tear gas at crowds of protesters Tuesday as a general strike aimed at forcing President Hugo Chavez to call elections escalated into clashes on its second day.

Opposition leaders accused the government of harassment, and government ministers accused strike leaders of trying to provoke a coup.

Oil executives called a rally at the headquarters of the state-owned oil monopoly after the home of a top manager was robbed early Tuesday. As crowds gathered at the protest site, which the government had declared off-limits for demonstrations, troops rolled in and dispersed them with tear gas.

With pressure rising in Venezuela, the U.S. State Department urged the government to restart negotiations.

Help Save A Life – Donate Plasma Today.
It's The Right Thing To Do!

And Each Month You Can Earn Up To

\$180

BIOLIFE PLASMA SERVICES

803.254.6683

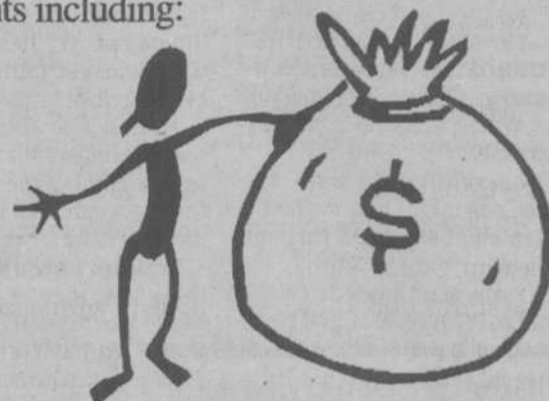
1916 Taylor Street • Columbia, SC 29201

LOOKING FOR SOMEWHERE COOL TO BE IN 2003?

Carolina Dining Services is now accepting applications for all positions at our new dining formats. These include Sub-Connection, Earthworks, Cinnabon, Zia's and Pandinis.

We offer many benefits to students including:

- Free meals while at work
- Free uniforms
- Flexible schedules
- Closed for major holidays
- Hands-on experience
- Manager trainee opportunities



Please apply in person in front of GMP December 5, 6, 9 and 10th from 11 am-2pm or apply at 1718 College Street before December 13th.

BOOK SALE

ALL BOOKS 25% OFF OR MORE

- Select books at special prices including
- Carolina Voices (paperback) \$16.95 \$10.00
 - Charleston in My Time \$49.95 \$30.00
 - A Guide to the Wildflowers of South Carolina (paperback) \$29.95 \$20.00
 - A History of the University of South Carolina, 1940-2000 \$39.95 \$20.00
 - University of South Carolina: A Portrait \$39.95 \$15.00

Weekdays from noon until 4:00 p.m.

November 18 through December 18 (except November 28 and 29)

USC Press Warehouse, 718 Devine Street
between Gadsden and Pulaski Streets
(behind Carolina Coliseum)



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PRESS

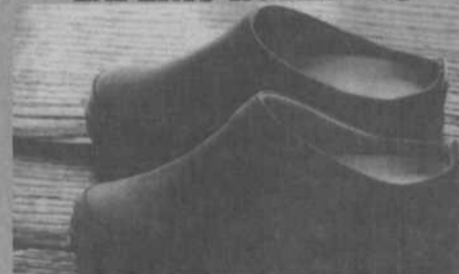
OUTLIVED DISCO, DISKETTES & DOT COMS.

BIRKENSTOCK BAREFOOTIN

1260 Bower Parkway
Suite 7
Columbia, SC 29212
803.749.3331

OVER
300
STYLES

EXPERTS IN FITTING



Ashby

Open 7 Days

www.birkenstockbarefootin.com

BIRKENSTOCK®

the BACKPACKER QUALITY GEAR

www.backpackerqualitygear.com



Come make your Christmas list with us:

- 1) North Face Jackets
- 2) Patagonia Fleece
- 3) Capilene Long Johns
- 4) Vasque Boots
- 5) Gregory Backpacks
- 6) Gift Certificates

...And more!

FREE GIFT WRAPPING

1215 Wayne Street - In the Vista • 799-7571

ROSEWOOD MARKET

Natural Foods & Deli

SHOP HERE FOR THE BEST GIFTS!
PICK OUT SOME GREAT BODY CARE PRODUCTS AND HAVE US WRAP THEM IN A BASKET, THROW IN SOME CHOCOLATE, A GIFT CERTIFICATE AND YOU ARE GOLDEN! WE HAVE LOTS OF GIFT IDEAS FROM BOOKS AND COFFEE TO INCENSE AND CANDLES AND LOTS OF GREAT FOOD!

Happy Ho Ho Ho to you!

www.rosewoodmarket.com

Deli: 256-6410
Store: 765-1083

M-Sat: 9-9
Sun: 10-6

