

Business Briefs

Science & Technology

Isotopes Can Destroy HIV Virus in Cells

A group of scientists is developing a technique to link radioactive atoms of bismuth-213, an energetic alpha emitter, and rhenium-188, a beta emitter, to HIV antibodies, to seek and destroy the virus that causes AIDS in the cells where it hides out.

The November issue of *PLoS Medicine* (Public Library of Science) reports that the scientists have had success killing infected immune cells in mice carrying human immune cells infected with HIV. Such techniques have already been used for tumor reduction in humans.

The bismuth-213 is a decay product of actinium-225, which is a decay product of uranium-233, from a stockpile kept by Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL).

Similarly, rhenium-188 is a decay product of tungsten-188, which is a product of the high-flux isotope reactor at ORNL. ORNL processes and packages radioisotope generators for use in the medical field.

Hedge Funds

British Regulators Warn Of 'Inevitable' Crash

"FSA Warns of 'Inevitable' Crash" reported the Nov. 7 London *Guardian*, in a public escalation of (particularly British) regulators' alarms over a blow-out of a large mass of "leveraged debt" hitting the financial markets, from the wild takeover speculation by hedge funds and private equity funds.

The British Financial Services Agency (FSA) published a "discussion paper on the private equity market" on Nov. 6, containing a strong warning, and a notice that it is increasing its oversight.

The *Guardian* article parallels closely the account of a threatened hedge-fund leveraged-debt crash in *EIR*, Nov. 3. A Wall Street source had told *EIR* at the time of the "Three Regulators' Meeting" in New York

on Sept. 27, that the British FSA was warning the U.S. Federal Reserve and Securities and Exchange Commission regulators of a leveraged-default crash.

The article lays out the FSA's worries: 1) big private equity defaults are inevitable, and "may" threaten the system; 2) leveraged bank lending into takeovers is \$90 billion (68 billion euro) in Britain alone this year, and 80% of that debt is then securitized to hedge funds, leading all holders of the debt to deny the risk; 3) the takeover funds engage in "smash and grab" looting of targets to carry through on "leverage"; 4) international funds are now flowing more rapidly into hedge and private equity funds than into stock markets, and actually shrinking stock markets. Insider trading is also mentioned.

Eurasia

'Iron Silk Road' Dream Comes Closer to Reality

"Asia's 40-year dream of 'Iron Silk Road' Comes Closer to Reality" proclaimed the headline in the Nov. 7 *Malaysia Sun*. Transport ministers and officials from 43 countries gathered in Busan, South Korea, the Asian terminal of the Great Eurasian Land-Bridge, on Nov. 6, for this year's ministerial conference on transport, organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The highlight of the six-day conference was to be the Nov. 10 signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway—the "Iron Silk Road."

The 81,000-kilometer (50,200-mile) network, first mooted by the United Nations in 1960, is to link capitals, ports, and industrial hubs across 28 Eurasian countries "from Busan to Rotterdam." The project has been portrayed by the international LaRouche movement as the necessary physical economic basis for a new world financial system.

Twelve of the world's 30 landlocked countries are in Asia, said Barry Cable, director of UNESCAP's Transport and Tourism Division.

"The agreement lays a framework for coordinated development of internationally important rail routes," UNESCAP chief Kim Hak-Su said in a statement.

Kim noted that Asia boasts 13 of the world's top 20 container seaports, but it has fewer than 100 "dry ports"—inland container depots—while Europe has 200 and the United States, 370.

Ministers of 15 of the 43 member countries, including China and South Korea, are to sign the agreement on Nov. 10. Others are to sign later. North Korea, which has participated in the meetings and was party to the agreements, "could not come to sign the agreement," according to Kim Hak-su, UNESCAP executive secretary.

Only about 6,500 kilometers are lacking to connect the whole 80,000-kilometer route—4,000 kilometers in Southeast Asia, and 2,000-plus kilometers in central Asia.

China already has a rail connection to the Koran Peninsula. Signed, but not yet implemented, are Chinese agreements with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan to build railroads from Xinjiang, and an agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to build a road and rail network connecting Kunming in Yunnan Province with Singapore.

Energy

Six Arab Nations Plan To Go Nuclear

The International Atomic Energy Agency has announced that six nations in the Arab world have indicated interest in developing nuclear technology for energy purposes.

The countries are Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates. Egypt led the way this Fall, announcing that it would revive its old nuclear energy program. Since then, President Hosni Mubarak has travelled to Moscow to discuss technology transfers. He also plans to visit China.

The Nov. 6 London *Times* and other media reporting on the Arab nations' interest, have raised the "specter" of a nuclear weapons race in the Arab world.