



## NEWS BRIEFS

### Tests Point to Spread of Weapons Trade

The progress of North Korea's nuclear program is raising new concerns about Pyongyang's weapons trade. Though North Korean arms have been sold to U.S. allies such as Pakistan and Egypt, trade has also focused on countries Washington has classified as state sponsors of terrorism such as Iran, Syria and Libya. Sales of short- and medium-range missile systems make up the bulk of North Korea's exports, generating \$1.5 billion a year for the country. U.S. and United Nations officials are concerned that North Korea's recent arms test could fuel the nation's need to smuggle weapons of mass destruction as the international community considers economic sanctions against the nation for its recent arms test. To compensate for the loss of foreign aid and trade in markets such as South Korea and Japan, officials say Pyongyang could step up its export of nuclear and missile technologies to countries that sponsor terrorism. "The concern is not just that they have a nuclear weapon; it's what they're going to do with the technology and where it's going to go," said a senior U.S. defense official.

### U.S. Cracks Down on Corporate Bribes

The U.S. Justice Department is investigating at least 120 firms for violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), a law passed after Watergate that forbids multi-national U.S. companies from extending bribes. According to Mark Mendelsohn, whose Justice Department division is responsible for managing the prosecution of firms, 100 U.S. companies were investigated for bribery in 2008. Sun Microsystems Inc. and Royal Dutch Shell PLC are among the companies now facing review, according to the firms' disclosure statements. The language of the FCPA is broad enough to include cash, favors, and other gifts, and has many companies concerned about gray-area practices such as buying meals for foreign dignitaries. "When you have a law that can result in criminal sanctions and jail time and that you can violate without actually realizing you're violating it, that's terrifying," explained President Alexandra Wrage of Trace International Inc., a nonprofit in Washington, D.C. that specializes in compliance with antibribery laws. Because of heightened enforcement by the Justice Department, many firms are hiring consultants to identify expensive gifts, dinners, and trips that may violate bribery laws. The department has given a break to some firms that have preemptively confessed their wrongdoings.

### Scare Tactics

Experts say that workplace bullying is on the rise, due to the slumping economy and the fears it has created. In addition, the tight job market has made some supervisors take the attitude that they can treat employees however they want, since it is easy to find a replacement for someone if they quit, said Gary Namie, the director of the Bellingham, Wash.-based Workplace Bullying Institute. The increase in bullying has had a number of negative effects on businesses, including lower morale, said Alan Cavaiola, an associate professor at Monmouth University and the co-author of "Toxic Co-Workers: How to Deal With Dysfunctional People on the Job." Experts say there are a number of things employees should do if they find themselves being bullied. For starters, bullied employees should stand up to their bullies, since doing so will often put a stop to the harassment, according to Red Bank workplace coach Donna Coulson. If the bullying does not stop, workers should begin keeping a diary of what they experience so they have a record of the problem they can give to human resources. If necessary, bullied employees should take their case to the highest-level official in the company who is not pledged or related to the bully. Employers also need to do their part in recognizing the need to address bullying, said Kathleen M. Connelly, a lawyer at Lindabury, McCormick, Estabrook & Cooper in Rumson, N.J. "Employers have dropped the ball in not recognizing that an essential element of being a supervisor is managing people, and that means being able to do that in a respectful manner," she said.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Twittering With Disaster

Social networking is now being used by emergency preparedness and response personnel. Jeannette Sutton, a research coordinator at the University of Colorado's Natural Hazards Center thinks that online information networks will change the way people communicate during disasters. Sutton began researching the role of social media in warnings and risk communications during the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings. She noticed that wall posts on Facebook were sharing accurate information regarding the murders before it was released by officials. Everyone around the United States was providing information, and it was not done haphazardly. Sutton's dealings with the 2007 California wildfires showed her that the online public can actually provide accurate data. The wildfires were one of the first times that Twitter was used as a disaster communications tool. During the mishap, "citizen journalists" started posting their corrections to misinformation regarding evacuations that was being transferred from public officials. Researchers, like Sutton, are not the only ones who are noticing the social media trend. An article on CNN.com examined the ways that police and fire departments are using Twitter and Facebook to provide information, such as crime tips, suspect descriptions, Amber Alerts, press releases, and road closings, to the public. Federal agencies, such as FEMA, the Centers for Disease Control, and the CDC are also utilizing social media outlets. Although officials are aware of the presence of social media, Sutton feels they could examine it more. "Officials still pay very little attention to social media," she says. "Surprisingly, we still have barriers to break with getting public officials to look at information shared in blogs, and they've been around for much longer than these other technologies. Perception is everything, really."

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