

Institute for Science and International Security

ISIS IMAGERY BRIEF

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New Satellite Image Shows Activity at Parchin Site in Iran

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ISIS has acquired commercial satellite imagery of the Parchin site in Iran showing new activity that substantiates the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) stated concern regarding recent "activity" at the site. The new activity seen in the satellite image occurred outside a building suspected to contain an explosive chamber used to carry out nuclear weapons related experiments (see figure 1). The April 9, 2012 satellite image shows items lined up outside the building. It is not clear what these items are. The image also shows what appears to be a stream of water that emanates from or near the building. Based on new information that the IAEA received, the Agency asked Iran to visit this building at the Parchin site, but Iran has not allowed a visit. IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano noted recently that the IAEA has "information that some activity is ongoing" at the Parchin site. When asked if he was concerned that these activities could be associated with cleansing the site, Amano replied, "That possibility is not excluded...We cannot say for sure because we are not there." The items visible outside the building could be associated with the removal of equipment from the building or with cleansing it. The stream of water that appears to emanate from the building raises concerns that Iran may have been washing inside the building, or perhaps washing the items outside the building. Satellite images of the building from recent months do not show any similar activity at the site—indicating that such activity is not a regular occurrence at this building (see figures 2 and 3).

Iran should immediately allow IAEA inspectors into the Parchin site and allow access to this specific building. It should also explain the purpose of the activities seen at the building in this recent satellite image.



Figure 1. April 9, 2012 commercial satellite image shows new activity outside a building at the Parchin site in Iran suspected of containing an explosive test chamber used to carry out nuclear weapons-related experiments. Items can be seen outside the building. It is not clear what these items are. The image also shows what appears to be a stream of water emanating from or near the building. These activities raise concerns that Iran is removing items and washing equipment or the building itself.

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Figure 2. March 4, 2012 commercial satellite image shows the building absent any other activity. The activity seen in the April 9, 2012 satellite image is not present in any other ISIS satellite imagery of this building, indicating that the activity seen is not a regular occurrence.

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Figure 3. July 28, 2011 commercial satellite imagery of the site shows the building absent any other activity. The activity seen in the April 9, 2012 satellite image is not present in any other ISIS satellite imagery of this building, indicating that the activity seen is not a regular occurrence.

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