



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
United States Department of Energy
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Washington, DC 20585



NEWS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

July 28, 2009

U.S. Department of Energy Inspector General Gregory H. Friedman, Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge Stephanie Douglas, and San Mateo County Sheriff Greg Munks announced today that a joint investigation has led to the arrest of Silvyia Oommachen, age 32, of Palo Alto, CA, in connection with vandalism at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory. Early last week, approximately 4,000 to 5,000 separate protein crystal samples were destroyed. The damage occurred in the Joint Center for Structural Genomics (JCSG) Laboratory at SLAC's Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource. A JCSG administrator estimates the value of the loss to be approximately \$500,000. On Monday, July 27, 2009, Ms. Oommachen, a former employee, was taken into custody on suspicion of violating United States Code, Title 18, Section 1361, "Committing Damage to Government Property or Contracts." The IG is working closely with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, and the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California. Department of Energy and SLAC officials have been cooperative during the investigation.

The Department of Energy, Office of Inspector General, investigates crimes committed against the Department. SLAC, including the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource, is operated by Stanford University under contract to the Department.

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