SEARCH CONTINUES AS DEATH TOLL TOPS 100

by James Dalemore

DARIAN – At the time of this printing, rescue efforts continue in downtown Darian. Over one hundred bodies have been recovered from the wreckage and officials expect this number to continue to climb.

At approximately 3:15 pm yesterday, downtown Darian was rocked by an enormous explosion. The blast could be felt as far as five city blocks away. Jennifer Sawyer of the Third National Bank of Darian said, “The blast shook the whole office! I fell out of my chair as ceiling tiles came crashing down and windows shattered. I was sure a missile or a plane had hit our building. I was pretty surprised to find out the explosion was three blocks away.” Some reports indicate that the explosion rose so high in the air that it could be spotted across the bay in Darian Heights.

The epicenter of the explosion was the corporate headquarters of Psion-Inc. While the exact cause of the explosion is unknown, officials have speculated that the blast occurred inside the building and may have been the result of one or more explosive devices. It was originally believed that this explosion was caused by a Psion-Inc scientific project gone awry, however, officials have discounted this theory. While trying to clear the area of civilians, Police Sergeant Emmett “Smitty” Barnes commented, “C’mon, get real. I’ve seen some explosions in my time. This was intentional. Someone planted a bunch of bombs and blew these scientific sickos sky high.”

Over one hundred and thirty employees are believed to have been on duty in the Psion-Inc building when the explosion occurred. Just after emerging from the collapsed building, Fire Captain Dwayne Murphy said while gasping for air, “The explosion decimated the entire building. At this point, we’re still trying to identify if anyone is alive within the building. It appears that there were several basements in this building, going down as much as 200 feet underground. We had initially hoped there might be survivors on the bottom floors, but that’s becoming increasingly unlikely the further we descend.”

Rescuers are also searching the surrounding buildings for survivors. While the explosion was primarily contained by the Psion-Inc structure, some surrounding buildings sustained damage. Officials believe they’ve evacuated all personnel from the surrounding buildings, but the search continues to ensure no one is left behind. EMS Tech Tonya Suber said, “Most of the people that were evacuated from the surrounding structures have had minor injuries. We don’t expect any fatalities from individuals that were outside of the Psion-Inc building.”

There have been several shocking unconfirmed reports coming from the rescue site regarding the state of the bodies being removed from the wreckage. The Darian Daily has not been able to confirm this information first-hand, however, enough reports have been filed that these bear mentioning. It appears that numerous bodies recovered from the lower levels of the Psion-Inc building had been mutilated prior to the explosion at 3:15 pm yesterday. Some reports indicate that these individuals may have been cadavers used during Psion-Inc experiments; other reports bear evidence suggesting vivisection. Some accounts continue to describe inhuman mutations and injuries indicative of long periods of torture. Nineteen months ago, Psion-Inc was found guilty of practicing illegal and unethical experiments. With the CEO removed and a portion of the staff dismissed, they were allowed to restructure under the direction of Dr. Summer Ann Mitchell (a.k.a. Kaliko of the metahuman team the Challengers). These early reports suggest that Psion-Inc may not have changed their scientific pursuits as drastically as the public was lead to believe.

The Challengers of Darian metahuman team has been on hand to assist with the rescue efforts. When questioned regarding this tragedy, Danger-Man spoke for the team, “We’re just here to help. We don’t have any statements to make or any information regarding what happened. Right now we just want to save lives.”