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Saudi Arabia “warned the United States in writing about Boston Bombl 2012”

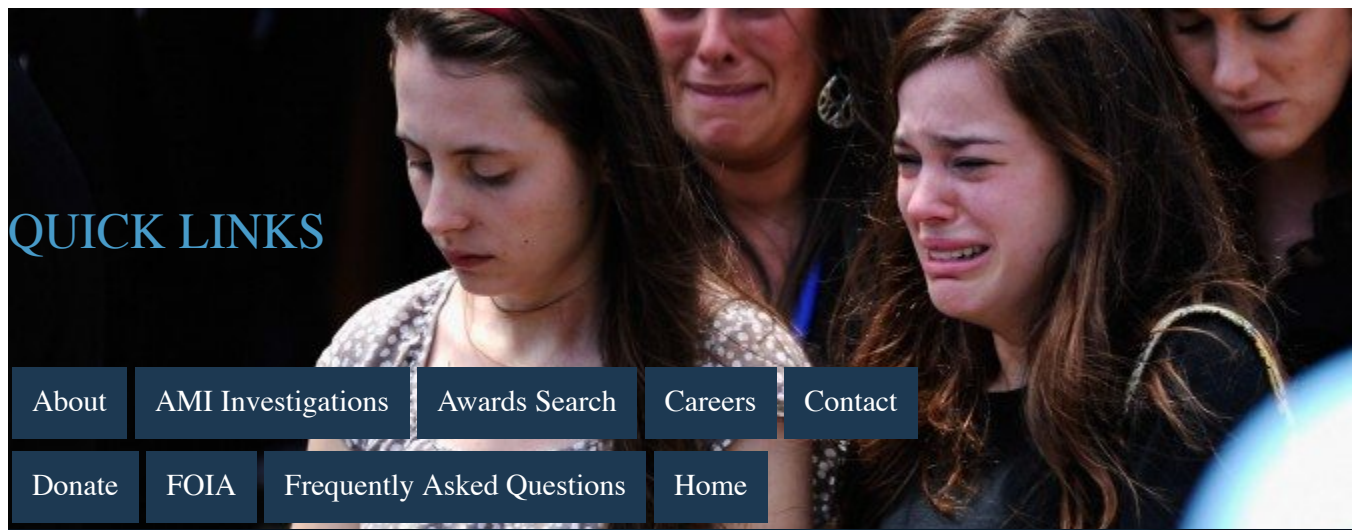


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the official told MailOnline, was separate from the multiple red flags raised by Russia on human intelligence developed independently in Yemen.

Citing security concerns, the Saudi government also denied an entry visa to the elder Tsarnaev brother in make a pilgrimage to Mecca, the source said. Tsarnaev's plans to visit Saudi Arabia have not been proven.

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The Saudis' warning to the U.S. government was also shared with the British government. 'It was very,

was going to happen in a major U.S. city,' the Saudi official said during an extensive interview.

It 'did name Tamerlan specifically,' he added. The 'government-to-government' letter, which he said was Security at the highest level, did not name Boston or suggest a date for his planned attack.

If true, the account will produce added pressure on the Homeland Security department and the White House after similar warnings were offered about Tsarnaev by the Russian government.

A DHS official denied, however, that the agency received any such warning from Saudi intelligence about

‘DHS has no knowledge of any communication from the Saudi government regarding information on the Bombing prior to the attack,’ MailOnline learned from one Homeland Security official who declined to b

The White House took a similar view. ‘We and other relevant U.S. government agencies have no record c
Caitlin Hayden, a spokesperson for the president’s National Security Council.

The letter likely came to DHS via the Saudi Ministry of Interior, the agency tasked with protecting the Sa

A Homeland Security official confirmed Tuesday evening on the condition of anonymity that the 2012 le
Saudi communication before MailOnline inquired about it.

An aide to a Republican member of the House Homeland Security Committee speculated Tuesday about
contradicted the knowledgeable Saudi official.

‘It is possible the Department of Homeland Security received the information from the Saudi governmen
House,’ the GOP staffer said. ‘Communication between DHS and the White House’s national security ap

‘I can easily see it happening where one hand didn’t know what the other was doing because of a turf wa

‘Just like the different agencies in the Boston JTTF [Joint Terrorism Task Force] want credit for breaking
‘they sometimes jealously guard the very intel they should be sharing the most freely. Sometimes it make

House Homeland Security Committee chairman Mike McCaul plans to announce on Wednesday an inves
intelligence knew prior to the Boston attacks, two senior Republican sources told MailOnline.

Separately, President Obama announced Tuesday that the U.S. government will launch a wide-ranging in
among the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security and other intelligence
federal government.

‘We want to leave no stone unturned,’ the president said in a rare White House press conference.

The internal review will be led by Director of National Intelligence James Clapper and several inspectors

‘This is not an investigation,’ Clapper’s spokesman Shawn Turner said in a prepared statement. ‘This is a sharing procedures. It is limited to the handling of information related to the suspects prior to the attack.’

It is not yet clear whether information from Saudi Arabia will be involved in Clapper’s inter-agency review.

Utah Republican Rep. Jason Chaffetz appeared on CNN Tuesday afternoon, upbraiding the Obama administration’s handling of intelligence prior to the Boston bombings was appropriate and effective.

‘As soon as the bombing happened we had officials, locally and from the feds, saying, “Oh, this was an intelligence involved.” We didn’t know that,’ Chaffetz said.

The ‘starting point’ for a federal investigation, he said, must be, ‘This is unacceptable, we will not stand idly by and we will not rest until we figure it out.’

‘Mr. President,’ he said, addressing Obama, ‘the starting point should be an intolerance that this thing happens.’

The high-ranking Saudi official whom MailOnline interviewed at length provided a wealth of detail about the letter sent to the United States. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to talk publicly about Saudi Arabia’s diplomatic relationship with the United States.

He suggested that the Saudi Ministry of Interior sent the letter out of an abundance of caution in order to protect itself though its intelligence on Tsarnaev wasn’t yet fully developed.

‘With Saudi Arabia it’s always code red,’ he said. ‘There’s no code orange, or code yellow. Always red.’

The Saudi government, he added, alerted the U.S. in part because it believed American authorities should be alerted to Tsarnaev in the mail in order to search for bomb-making components.

The written warning also allegedly named three Pakistanis who may be of interest to British authorities. The Saudi official provided details about the warning to the UK, but said the two governments received the same information.

The Ministry of Interior, he said, sent the letters in 2012, likely after Tsarnaev returned from Russia to the United States.

President Barack Obama’s published schedule indicates that he met in the Oval Office with Prince Mohammad bin Abdul Aziz, Saudi Interior minister, on January 14, 2013.

The Saudis denied Tsarnaev entry to the kingdom when he sought to travel to Mecca in December 2011 for one that is undertaken during months that don’t fall within the regular Hajj period of the year.

That rejected application came one month before he traveled to Russia, where U.S. intelligence sources told him to construct and detonate the bombs that he and his younger brother placed near the Boston Marathon.

The younger brother, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, is in federal custody at a prison medical facility.

The Saudi official speculated that Tsarnaev’s residence in the United States might have made it more difficult to enter the kingdom.

‘U.S.-based Muslims who become radicalized and want to visit Mecca create an unusual problem,’ he said. ‘We need to carefully examine applications.’

In the wake of the April 15 Boston Marathon bombings, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal met with President Obama on April 16, and then had an unscheduled meeting with President Obama on April 17.

‘This is the DNA of the Saudi government,’ said the Saudi official, referring to officials in the royal court. ‘They sent the letter, but that wasn’t enough. They then sent the top guy to meet personally with the president.’

He dismissed the idea that Tamerlan Tsarnaev was likely trained by al Qaeda while he was outside the United States.

The Saudis’ Yemen-based sources, he explained, said militants referred to Tamerlan dismissively as ‘the volunteer.’

‘He was a gung-ho, self motivated jihadi who wasn’t tasked by a larger group,’ he said.

‘There is no reason for anyone in Afghanistan to have in his thinking a scenario like this,’ the official added. ‘He took the initiative. That’s why they call him “the volunteer.”’

‘The Boston thing is beneath them,’ he said of al Qaeda. ‘They don’t think like this. This is like a firecracker, big.’

Tamerlan may have boasted about his plans online, the Saudi official said, offering an explanation for how he did it. Islamist militants have well-developed social networks that can enable news to migrate quickly across the globe.

The Saudi government sometimes tracks such radicals by launching fake jihadi websites to attract extremists. It also tracks them electronically, often across the world, and shares information with governments it considers friendly.

‘The Saudi Arabian government is doing everything it can to wipe out these people and treat America as an enemy,’ he said.

The Saudi intelligence services have a long history of providing credible information to America and Great Britain.

‘This is the fourth time the Saudi Arabian government has given the U.S. specific intel’ about a possible terrorist attack, he said. ‘We have given the U.S. warnings about Richard Reid, the so-called shoe bomber who repeatedly tried to light a fuse in his shoe to blow up the plane. He was 63 bound for Miami in December 2001.’

He also cited the 300-gram ‘ink-cartridge bombs’ planted on two cargo planes headed for the United States. Those explosives were intercepted in Dubai, and at an East Midlands airport in Great Britain.

Tamerlan Tsarnaev’s namesake was a 15-century Central Asian warlord who referred to himself as ‘the sultan’. ‘Tamerlane’ in English, he was known for his cruelty.

When he conquered Baghdad, he reportedly made a pyramid of human skulls from unfortunate residents.

Although still revered in Chechnya and throughout Central Asia, the original Tamerlane is sometimes vilified.

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