

Under the Radar

Josh Gerstein on the Courts, Transparency, & More

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By JOSH GERSTEIN | 09/13/2016 05:54 PM EDT

Conservative media personality Glenn Beck and several related companies have reached an out-of-court settlement with a Saudi Arabian student Beck accused of involvement in financing the deadly 2013 bombings near the finish line of the Boston Marathon.

Abdulrahman Alharbi sued Beck, his firms The Blaze and Mercury Radio Arts, as well as distributor Premiere Networks for defamation in federal court in Boston over his assertions that Alharbi—who was injured in the attack—served as "the money man" for the operation.

While numerous news organizations speculated publicly about Alharbi's involvement, Alharbi's suit filed in 2014 said Beck persisted in his statements even after Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano publicly cleared the Saudi student of any role in the bombings.

The settlement was disclosed Tuesday in a brief order from U.S. District Court Judge Patti Saris dismissing the case. No dollar amount was revealed.

"The parties in this matter have reached a settlement of the pending action. The terms of the settlement are confidential," both sides in the suit said in a joint statement.

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By JOSH GERSTEIN

"No party has admitted any fault, wrongdoing, or responsibility as part of the settlement. Defendants have agreed to settlement of the pending action in furtherance of fundamental principles of journalistic integrity by preserving the confidentiality of their sources consistent with their rights and privileges under the First Amendment. The Plaintiff has pursued this action for the reasons set forth in his Complaint and believes those interests have been served by this resolution," the statement said.

The settlement came about a month after the judge ruled that Beck's producers had to reveal the identity of two confidential sources relied upon for the accusations Beck leveled at Alharbi.

The day after the judge's ruling, Beck suggested that complying with it could get the

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Saris was in the process of considering what sanctions to impose for the defiance when the settlement was reached.

While the settlement may have been prodded by the potential fallout from the judge's call for Beck's team to name its sources, Saris' ruling also knocked out the possibility of punitive damages in the case, as well as a claim that Beck and the related companies were "unjustly enriched" by slandering Alharbi. That part of the judge's decision may have limited Alharbi's chance at an outsized verdict in the case and eased the path to a deal.

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