

Britain: Citizenship Restored To Cleric Wanted On Terrorism Charges In U.S.

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Body

A British government ruling stripping the Egyptian-born Muslim cleric known as Abu Hamza al-Masri of his British citizenship was struck down Friday by a special immigration court. But government officials said the court's action would not affect the government's plan to extradite the cleric to the United States, where he is wanted on terrorism charges. Officials in the office of Home Secretary Theresa May said no decision had been made on whether to appeal the immigration court's ruling to a higher British court. The immigration panel upheld the claim by lawyers for Mr. Hamza, 53, whose real name is Mostafa Kamel Mostafa, that losing the British citizenship he gained through marriage in 1986 would leave him stateless, because Egypt's government has revoked his Egyptian citizenship. He has carried his fight to avoid extradition to the European Court of Human Rights. He is wanted in the United States, where he is accused in connection with a plot to establish a terrorism training camp in Oregon, and is alleged to have had a role in planning a terrorist ambush in Yemen in 1998 in which 16 foreign tourists, some of them Americans, were taken hostage. Four hostages were subsequently killed.

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