

Boston marathon bombings

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Boston Marathon Bombings Name: Course: Date: Boston Marathon Bombings

Introduction It has been a week since the Boston Marathon Bombings that killed and injured more than 140 people. The bombings happened at 2. 50 pm, more than 2hours after most of the 27, 000 runners in the first race had crossed the finish line.

The bombings happened near the finish line where a large number of people were expected. This shocked the whole nation. However, the suspects were identified as two brothers, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26 and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, 19. The life of the two suspects, especially the elder brother, is worth looking at since it raises several questions about the bombings. He is said to have lured his younger brother into the bombings. Several years ago, Russian government had been suspicious and asked for an investigation from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the United States. After the bombing, the elder one, Tamerlan was killed in a fire exchange after opening fire to the police.

These bombings sent a shock to the whole of America as the police and intelligence agencies sought more information to answer several evolving questions. This has further brought about several conspiracies in an effort to find out the truth. Life and history of the suspects The history of the two brothers identified as the bombers in the Boston marathon is one that elicits so many questions. It is a life that is woven into several conflicts associated with their ethnic origin and homeland. Originally from the southern part of Russia, the family history involves several issues including two Chechen wars, severe beating in United States that saw their father back to their homeland and a deportation by Soviet leader Josef Stalin[1]. At their young

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age, the suspects were on the move frequently from home to home dodging conflicts before settling in the United States as refugees.

[2] Their father's family came from the Chechen community, but was one of the many families that the soviet leader, Stalin expelled for their disloyalty in the Second World War. The family resettled in Kyrgyzstan where the father of the two suspects was born and brought up. Here, he served his mandatory years in military during the 80s in a place called Novosibirsk where he met Zubeidat Tsarnaeva, his wife who was from Dagestan. After marrying, the two went back to Kyrgyzstan where they had four children, two daughters and the two sons who are the suspects.

The family tried settling in Chechnya, but the 1990s wars saw them back in Kyrgyzstan.[3] In 2001, the family moved to Dagestan where the mother initially came from and still had family relatives. At this time, the two boys were 14 and 7 years old and lived there for just six months time during when they obtained the status of refugee and moved to the United States.

Although the parent would come back to visit, the boys remained in the United States. The only one of the two suspects who visited their homeland was Tamerlan who stayed for about six months.

It is during this time that he showed some sign of embracing radicalism back at home, where even his uncle had to chase him from home for radical views, which the family did not embrace. It is believed that it is during this time that Tamerlan started having plans for terrorism and drag his younger brother, who had never been in their homeland country since the family resettled in United States as refugees. Although it is still not well known what

drove the two brothers to conduct such an act, the chairman to the House Intelligence Committee cited that, “ Tamerlan may have traveled under an alias when he took a trip to Russia in 2012.[4] However, it is believed that his violence intentions became heightened when he visited his homeland at a time when his radicalization reached the extreme and pushed him to violence. It is believed that he may have received training during the six months he visited his homeland.

His younger brother was planning to visit his homeland in May for the first time after they left when he was seven years old. During the six-month stay in Dagestan, he would visit some relatives in Chechnya with his father. He returned to the United States in July from the airport in Groznyy in the Chechen capital. It is also surprising that the Russian government had issued a warning to the Federal Bureau of Investigation over terrorism over the same person. The FBI investigated him for a while, looking into his calls and other forms of electronic communication. Never finding anything about him that could link him to terrorism or radical Islamism, the FBI ended their investigation citing it was negative.[5] However, the Boston marathon bombings were not anticipated. After the bombings, several unanswered questions have come up.

According to the FBI in a review of their investigations on his case, it was said that the investigation was carried out on behalf of a foreign government that was not specified. It was based on information that he was following radical Islam as well as a strong believer. It further cited that, since the year 2010, as he prepared to leave for home, he had changed and was planning

to leave the United States to join undisclosed underground groups in an undisclosed country. This further makes it compelling that he had a connection with some terrorist groups before the attack. However, no one has any compelling or solid evidence to conclude his intentions. During his trip in Dagestan, he showed signs of extremism on religion to his family where his uncle as aforementioned kicked him out of the house.

[6] A relative of the two brothers said that Tamerlan had been radicalized back in the United States even before his trip. Considering that Dagestan is one of the poorest places in Russia with an Islamic insurgency seeking to establish Dagestan as an independent state, it would be no surprise of him receiving training and even becoming more radical. However, no links have showed ties with any of the militant groups in Dagestan. However, it is believed that the six months visit had turned his life around and played a major role in the Boston Marathon Bombings. Upon returning to United States after the six-month visit, he started posting more and more videos of jihads over You Tube. He went to become a fundamental Muslim as Michael McCaul, chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee said.[7] Authorities now believe that he went there to visit his relatives but received some training that radicalized him before coming back to United States. People who knew him cite that he was not that way before the visit.

It was even cited that he wanted to become a boxer and represent the United States in the Olympics. Unanswered questions about the bombings After the bombs went off near the finish line, several questions arose. One of the questions was whether the suspects had planned more attacks. This is

one of the most important questions to the investigators since the two brothers had the ability to cause more violence considering they fired back at the police and hauled several explosives at them including a pressure cooker bomb, similar to the one used in the bombings. With such explosives at their disposal, it is most likely that the two brothers planned more attacks. Several authorities have cited recovering several collections of deadly weapons from several crime scene locations that include guns and hundreds of ammunition, grenades, and homemade bombs.

The police have cited that this was supposed to be the first of several others that were to come.[8] It is clear that, with the weapons the two brothers had, there were more plans, though the location was unknown. Another important question is whether some terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda oversaw the attacks.

With such young individuals, it would be hard to believe that it was out of their own thirst for violence. Some believe there was a force behind all this although no evidence shows any connection to terrorist groups except Tamerlan's visit to Dagestan for six months, where it is believed he became radicalized. Investigators are focusing on his six-month visit to Russia in January of 2012, where he first traveled to Moscow, to Dagestan and finally to Chechnya. Many believe he spent much of his time visiting relatives there. Although the parents said he was not contacting with any Islamic groups, authorities believe he did not act like a visitor. It is again believed that he had traveled under an alias.

[9] The issue of connection to a terrorist group was heightened when after a report about the Russian government had been suspicious of his connections with a terrorist group in 2011. Although the FBI conducted an investigation, no such links were found, and the message was relayed back to the Russian government. With more suspicion that he may have received some training, the possibility of a connection with terrorist groups is not entirely eliminated. However, the little likelihood does not prove anything of such magnitude.

Another question that came up is whether there was involvement of any of the Islamic militant groups that are responsible for most of terrorism acts in Russia. It remains unclear whether Tamerlan had any contact with any of the predominant Islamist militant groups in the region. However, a group of leaders of an Islamic insurgency against Russia cited that it was only at war with Russia and had no interests in the United States and remained distanced from the Boston Marathon event. The group further maintained it is fighting with Russia, which it believes is responsible for many of the miseries of Muslims in the country.[10] Although the group may be fighting against Russia, the possibility of providing Tamerlan with training could be there. However, this cannot be answered easily considering that the insurgency group would like to remain distanced. However, a possibility that the insurgency leaders were telling the truth is their nature of agreeing to take blames on such actions.

Thus, this makes it harder to know the truth about the involvement of Tamerlan with any of the insurgency groups.[11] Another question that raises issues is whether the bombs were homemade and whether there were

others involved.[12] Homemade bombs would indicate that people have a lot of exposure to information that could be used in dangerous ways if got into the wrong hands.

On the other hand, if others were involved, it could indicate that America allows weapons to civilians so easily. Although this could not be blamed on the action of a person who wishes to engage in such actions, such availability would make it easy for them. The residues found in the evidence collected after the explosions indicate that the bombs were, “ pressure-cookers packed with explosives and shrapnel – as relatively simple in their basic design, but with sophisticated components, including what appeared to be an electronic detonation mechanism capable of being triggered by cellular phones.”[13] Information on making of such bombs has been published in Al-Qaeda linked groups, although one would wonder whether they could provide enough information to make such a bomb. Additionally, the authorities are constantly monitoring such websites that provide such materials.

Further, the authorities say it was unlikely that the two brothers made the bombs considering they would need to test them before using in order to find out whether they would work. There are no reports of any test or explosives being heard anywhere, which raises more questions and concerns. Thus, several theories could be cited here. Either, he had already made such during his visit in Dagestan or he acquired the bombs from somebody, meaning there were other people involved. The possibilities are quite many at the time, and one could not be sure where the bombs were

sourced from or how they were made. Additionally, the two brothers had guns and many rounds of ammunition, but the authorities do not know where these came from.[14] Although there are many places one can buy a gun in United States, getting a one requires a procedure, which non-citizens might not be allowed.

Although there is a possibility, there is no indication that the two acquired the guns legally.[15] In addition, it is hard to buy more than one gun at a time or have two without any reason. This leaves an unanswered question of how the two brothers were able to acquire the guns and ammunitions, as well as the bombs, since no one is sure whether they made them. Although the younger brother could clarify this issue, he is not yet stable, and he is largely communicating with investigators on writing due to a throat injury. Another question raised by the bombings is why the brothers did not flee after the bombings occurred, as it would be expected. After the bombings, the two brothers returned to their normal lives with the younger brother, Dzhokhar returning to the campus in the University of Massachusetts.[16] This raises a lot of concern considering what he was responsible for. Was it a way of trying to eliminate any suspicions that could have followed had they fled, or is it because they thought nobody would recognize them? This is hard to answer considering they probably knew what they were doing as well as the magnitude of their act and the consequences.

In addition, the older brother returned back to his home in Cambridge before the fatal chase and the gun battle with police that ended fatally. This suggests that the suspects tried to be as discrete as possible in order not to

attract the police or any authorities.[17] This could further explain why they targeted Boston Marathon. First, it is because there would be more damage due to overcrowding caused by the event considering so many people gather for this marathon. With so many people, it would also provide some kind of cover where the police would not be able to suspect their actions. Thirdly, the fact that they planned to return to their normal lives probably made them choose a place near home.

Although it is not known why they choose Boston as the place for their venue, such issues are coming up trying to answer the questions.

Conspiracies arising Several people have come up with conspiracies that are both intriguing and raising eyebrows. For instance, one conspiracy suggests that these were planned explosions, the FBI being the planners.

The motive behind them was apparently to allow an extension of homeland security officers to go further or deeper with their security measures such as checking and investigating people without enough reasons or on the claim of ensuring security. This is the conspiracy theory according to Alex Jones, who claims the FBI orchestrated the event under the ‘ false flag’ of a terrorist organization with an aim of expanding their security powers.[18] He further claims that, “ The Boston attack, he theorized, was staged by the U. S. government to extend the reach of both the Dept. of Homeland Security and Transportation Security Administration.”[19] It is further based on the video that premiered on the 17th of March, the “ Turban Cowboy” that depicts Peter Griffin blowing up a bridge by accidentally dialing a terrorist’s cell phone.

However, the video making the headlines is showed with another unrelated moment where Bob Costas asks Peter about how he won the Boston Marathon.[20] This has raised the question whether this was staged or not. Although one could not want to believe such a conspiracy, one can never know the truth behind it. Another conspiracy that raises questions is one of a strange man in a Battle Dress Uniform (BDU), having something peculiar in his hands. After it was zoomed in from a picture taken, it was recognized as an Inspector Radiation Alert that is used for assessing nuclear attacks or dirty bombs.[21] This raises the question of why a person would have such a high military-grade device just moments after the bombing if it was not known or anticipated. Further, it leads to the question of why there were four BDU agents with suspected connection to Craft, an organization that provides a wide range of training services to its federal clients.[22] This raises the question of why such a private-sector highly specialized strike force would be around Boston during the marathon.

This is especially intriguing considering that the four men's backpacks resembled those that were carried by the bombers.[23] Could they have been the providers of the explosives? This would be hard to know. Further, some other units including sniffer dogs for checking any bombs were at the start line and the finish line before the race started. Additionally, there were spotters on the roofs, which was not ordinary according to one cross-country coach who felt it was odd to have bomb-sniffing dogs at the race.

Another coach said that the authorities kept telling participants not to worry that it was just a training exercise. This may not add up, but instead raises

many questions over the bombings. However, such conspiracies may not prove anything until investigations are carried out. Conclusion Although there are many conspiracies revolving around the bombings, it is hard to find the truth. Many questions remain unanswered over the motives, as well as how the two brothers managed to pull this through without raising any alarms with such authorities present at the scene of the event before the bombings happened. The two brothers' lives are not very clear but still nothing incriminating enough can connect them to any terrorist group or Islamic insurgency groups. Therefore, it remains a mystery why and how the two brothers managed to do it.

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