

Bombing Suspect 'Regains Consciousness'

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Two-year-old Wesley Brilliant kneeling Sunday in front of a memorial near the scene of the blasts in Boston. **Jim Bourg**

BOSTON — Boston bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev has regained consciousness and responded in writing to questions put to him by authorities, U.S. media reported.

But the ethnic Chechen college student remained severely wounded, unable to speak and hospitalized under heavy guard three days after his dramatic capture.

Tsarnaev, 19, whose tongue was injured in a gunshot to the throat before his arrest, was initially under sedation and incapable of being interviewed by investigators, authorities said. He also had been shot in the leg.

But the ABC and NBC news networks reported late Sunday that Tsarnaev had regained consciousness and was replying in writing to questions put to him by authorities after two

days under sedation in Boston's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

Other U.S. news sources, including CNN, said Tsarnaev was still sedated in the intensive care unit with a breathing tube down his throat.

Authorities told Reuters that the sedation, and a tongue injury from the throat wound itself, had left him incapable of speech and precluded questioning by investigators.

Much of investigators' attention has focused on a trip to Russia last year by his older brother and fellow suspect, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who is now dead, and whether Chechen separatists or Islamist extremists may have influenced or assisted the siblings.

The two brothers emigrated to the U.S. a decade ago from Dagestan.

They are accused of planting and setting off two homemade bombs near the crowded finish line of the Boston Marathon on April 15, killing three people and injuring more than 170 others.

Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, died after a gunfight three nights later with police on the streets of Watertown, the Boston suburb where authorities finally cornered his younger brother, ending a massive manhunt that shut down much of greater Boston on Friday.

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, a naturalized U.S. citizen, was found spattered with blood and hiding inside a covered boat parked in a Watertown backyard on Friday evening.

He apparently was hit by gunfire in the shootout that left his brother dead the day before, but it was not clear whether he suffered additional wounds in a final hail of bullets that preceded his capture.

Tsarnaev was shot in the throat, U.S. Senator Dan Coats, a member of the Intelligence Committee, told ABC. A source close to the investigation said he had damage to his tongue.

The suspect was placed under armed guard in the intensive care unit of Boston's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, where his brother was pronounced dead early Friday.

U.S. Attorney Carmen Ortiz, the federal prosecutor for the Boston area, was preparing criminal charges, according to Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis. It was not clear when charges would be filed.

Whether prosecutors ultimately decide to seek the death penalty if Tsarnaev were convicted hinges on various factors, such as his age, his apparent lack of a prior criminal history and whether he might have information leading to other suspects, legal experts say.

Photographs of the two brothers, allegedly in the act of planting bombs at the Boston Marathon, were circulated by the FBI on Thursday, with an appeal to the public for help in locating the then-unidentified pair.

The suspects surfaced late that night when they allegedly shot a campus police officer to death at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, then hijacked a sport utility vehicle before opening fire and hurling explosives at pursuing law enforcement.

During this confrontation, according to police, a transit cop was badly injured and the older Tsarnaev, walking toward officers and firing until he ran out of ammunition, was tackled by a police sergeant, only to be struck by the SUV as his brother sped away.

The younger Tsarnaev later abandoned the vehicle and vanished, leading authorities to impose a lockdown on the city of Boston and its suburbs before he was found and arrested in Watertown some 20 hours later.

Boston's police commissioner said investigators discovered at least four unexploded devices, including one similar to the two pressure cooker bombs detonated at the Boston Marathon.

"I personally believe they were [planning other attacks]," he said Sunday on CBS television's "Face the Nation."

Later on CNN, Davis said he was "confident" the two brothers "were the two major actors in the violence that occurred."

In Cambridge, police stationed themselves across from a home where various members of the Tsarnaev family had lived, advising bystanders to move on.

Patricia McMillan, who lives two doors down, said she last saw Tamerlan Tsarnaev in the neighborhood the Wednesday before the bombing, noting he had shaved off his beard and that he was smoking.

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