

CAMBRIDGE , WATERTOWN

Marathon bombing suspect captured in Watertown; condition ‘serious’**04/20/2013 1:22 AM**

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WATERTOWN — Four days after two deadly explosions turned the finish line of the Boston Marathon into a scene of bloody chaos, the 19-year-old college student believed to be responsible for placing the bombs was taken into custody Friday night, bringing a sense of relief and justice to a shaken region.

Dzhokhar A. Tsarnaev of Cambridge was pulled from his hiding place in a boat parked behind a house on Franklin Street shortly before 8:45 p.m. Friday in this community just outside Boston.

“We are eternally grateful for the outcome here tonight. We have a suspect in custody,” said Colonel Timothy Alben, commander of the State Police. “We’re so grateful to bring justice and closure to this case.”

“It’s a night where I think we’re all going to rest easy,” Governor Deval Patrick said at a news conference with a host of other officials in Watertown.

With the second suspect in the case, Tsarnaev’s brother, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, fatally wounded in a vicious gun battle with police early Friday morning, Boston Police Commissioner Edward F. Davis said, citizens “can be confident that the threat has been removed.”

The two terror bombs detonated on Monday afternoon killed three people and injured more than 170 as spectators cheered runners to the end of the world-renowned 26.2-mile race.

President Obama, speaking at the White House Friday night, said, “We’ve closed an important chapter in this tragedy.” But he also said there were “still many unanswered questions.”

“We will determine what happened. We will investigate any associations that these terrorists may have had. And we’ll continue to do whatever we have to do to keep our people safe,” he said.

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who exchanged gunfire with police from the boat, was rushed to a local hospital, where he was in serious condition, Davis said.

Police had approached him cautiously, worried that he might be wearing a suicide bomb vest.

“We got him,” Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino tweeted immediately afterwards. He took to the police radio to thank officers personally, telling them, “Good job, guys!”

The apprehension of Tsarnaev was the latest stunning development in a day of mayhem that had shocked the city, even as it was still reeling from Monday’s Marathon attacks. An MIT police officer was killed Thursday night, his body found shot multiple times in his cruiser, at about 10:30 p.m. in Cambridge. Then a carjacking was reported. Officers pursued the car, which turned out to contain the two Tsarnaevs, who threw explosives at them.

The elder brother was shot by police early Friday in a gun battle at Dexter and Laurel streets in Watertown, in which, officials said, the brothers wielded improvised explosive devices and homemade grenades. A doctor who treated Tamerlan Tsarnaev also said he had some blast-type injuries. “It was more than gunshot wounds,” said Dr. Richard Wolfe of the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. “We believe a combination of blasts, multiple gunshot wounds.”

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was so desperate to escape he ran over his brother as he lay wounded. He later abandoned the car on Spruce Street in Watertown and fled on foot, disappearing from sight, officials said.

Law enforcement mobilized, sending legions of heavily-armed police officers to search a 20-block area of the community. At the same time, Governor Deval Patrick took an unprecedented security step, asking people in Boston, Watertown, and several other nearby communities — totaling a million people — to “shelter in place” — stay at home behind locked doors and open up only to police officers with proper identification.

Government and business offices closed as police cars zoomed on mysterious errands on deserted streets. The Red Sox and Bruins games were canceled, as well as the Big Apple Circus. Amtrak was shut down from Boston to Providence, as well as the MBTA, the Boston area’s public transit system. The region came to a standstill.

Then, at 6 p.m. Friday, officials held another news conference to say that despite the massive manhunt, they had come up empty-handed. The suspect had not been snared in their perimeter. Officials said they remained determined to find him, however, and that they believed he was somewhere in Massachusetts. Patrick dropped his request for people to shelter in place and ordered the MBTA to resume service.

The dramatic finale came less than an hour after the news conference was over. A resident of Watertown came out of his house and noticed blood on his boat and that the tarp covering it was ripped. He lifted the tarp and saw a bloody form. He called police, who raced to the scene and exchanged gunfire with Tsarnaev, said Davis, the Boston commissioner.

Police surrounded the boat and there was a standoff for about an hour and a half. A State Police helicopter peeked at Tsarnaev from above, using a special infrared camera. Police deployed “flash bang” grenades to stun and distract him, Davis said.

A Globe photographer at the scene could hear police calling, “We know you’re in there. Come out on your own terms. Come out with your hands up.”

An FBI hostage rescue team was eventually able to pull him out.

MIT Police Officer Sean Collier, 26, of Somerville, who was fatally shot while sitting in his cruiser near Main and Vassar streets in Cambridge, in what Davis called an “assassination,” was remembered as a brave and devoted officer.

“As his family has said, he died bravely in the line of duty, doing what he committed his life to doing -- serving and protecting others. So we’re grateful to him,” Obama said in his White House remarks.

MBTA Transit Police Officer Richard H. Donohue Jr., 33, who was shot as officers pursued the Tsarnaevs into Watertown, was in critical but stable condition at Mt. Auburn Hospital.

While Watertown was a major scene of police activity during the day, police also converged on the Tsarnaev brothers' home in Cambridge. State Police said they found numerous pieces of evidence there, including "evidence of homemade explosives, including pipe bombs and another pressure cooker." Pressure cookers were used in the bombs that ripped through the Marathon crowds.

In yet another twist in the story, New Bedford police said this evening that three people had been taken into custody in their city as part of the bombing investigation.

New Bedford Police Lieutenant Robert Richard said his department assisted federal investigators in executing a search warrant at a home on Carriage Drive, about 10 minutes from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, where Tsarnaev was a student.

Richard said the FBI took two men and a woman into custody. "They appeared to be either fellow college students or fellow residents," he said.

The Tsarnaevs came from southern Russia, near war-torn Chechnya, more than five years ago, and assimilated through school and sports into the Greater Boston community and culture. But something went wrong.

As the day wore on, a portrait of the two suspects emerged, featuring Tamerlan Tsarnaev as an aggressive, possibly radicalized immigrant who may have ensnared his younger brother Dzhokhar — described almost universally as a smart and sweet kid — into an act of terror.

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