

Contradictory Media Reports: “Several Explosions” Near Boston Marathon “In Different Locations”

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By Juli Weiner

[Numerous news agencies](#) are [now reporting](#) that ~~bomb~~—or possibly several ~~bombs—exploded~~ there were several explosions near the finish line of this afternoon’s Boston Marathon at the Fairmount Copley Plaza Hotel. Boston.com [reports](#) that “multiple” people have been injured while *The Boston Globe* has the figure as “at least a dozen.” The damaged area, according to photos uploaded by onlookers and journalists to Twitter, appears chaotic, smokey, and partially evacuated. Horrifyingly, eyewitnesses have [reported](#) “blood everywhere.”

We will update as more information comes in; for breaking updates, see the [Boston.com](#) and [Boston Globe](#) Twitter feeds.

Update 3:30 p.m.: The Associated Press [has more details on the explosions](#): “About three hours after the winners crossed the line, there was a loud explosion on the north side of Boylston Street, just before the photo bridge that marks the finish line. Another thunderous explosion could be heard a few seconds later.” [Per CNN](#), nearby store windows and storefronts, on Boylston and Exeter Street, have been destroyed.

Talking Points Memo spoke with a witness who [described](#) the explosions as occurring “in two different locations less than a half mile apart, but both were above street level.”

Update 3:45 p.m.: Here’s a video of the explosion:

And another gut-wrenching photo:



Courtesy of Twitter/GlobeDavidLRyan.

Meanwhile, nearby hotels are [being evacuated](#) and organizers are [stopping runners who are still competing](#).

According to a Boston Police Department scanner, as reported by *Time*’s Andrew Katz, authorities [are escorting people](#) from Boston’s John F. Kennedy Library and Museum due to

the alleged presence of an “incendiary device.”

Update 4 p.m.: A third explosion [occurred](#) across the street from the Boston Public Library. The good news is that this was a controlled explosion—that is, one initiated by police before the device had the chance to violently explode on its own.

The Boston Marathon has [released](#) a statement confirming that the two prior explosions were the result of bombs.

Reports of the number dead and hurt are varying wildly: *The New York Post* [claims](#) that 12 have died—and that is very much unconfirmed—and CNN, citing a confirmation from the Boston Police, [reports that two have died and 22 are wounded](#). *The New York Times* also [confirms](#) two dead.

As for physical destruction, this photo posted to Twitter shows the destruction of a nearby Starbucks:



Courtesy of Stackiii/Twitter.

Update 4:22 p.m.: The Associated Press, which spoke with an intelligence official, is reporting that authorities [are now dismantling](#) two additional, as-yet-unexploded bombs near the site of the Marathon. Additionally, *The Boston Globe* [reports](#) that there is a “suspicious package” at a T station near Harvard.

If you have the stomach to handle such things, *The Atlantic* has [eight large and haunting images](#) of the aftermath of today’s explosions. However, [this](#) is the photo, by John Tlumacki, that is likely to become visual shorthand for the chaos and horror of the Patriots’ Day marathon massacre.

Law enforcement agencies in the Northeast, including those in Washington D.C. and New York, [have announced](#) states of extra vigilance and precaution. If possible, everyone just stay inside forever and clutch something soft.

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Update 4:40 p.m.: And here’s the beginning of part-two of this horrendous story: [according to CBS News](#), police “have surveillance video of someone bringing multiple backpacks into area 20 minutes or so before explosions.” Neither the Boston Police nor the F.B.I. “reports in recent days about a threat of an attack on the marathon and that there was no warning on Monday,” *The New York Times* [reports](#).

A number of other locations around the area of the initial explosions have been evacuated: [per a Boston radio station](#), this includes the Mandarin Hotel and “bridges over the Charles River.” The streets are [bumper-to-bumper with ambulances](#), as there is now [a reported total](#)

[of 64 injured](#).



Courtesy of [Twitter.com/DarrenDurlach](https://twitter.com/DarrenDurlach).

If you are in Boston and safe and sound and in the place of mind to do so, [please send](#) to the Boston Police any video, pictures, or other types of recordings of the Marathon finish line and its environs, as there might be clues to the whereabouts of those still missing and/or the perpetrators.

Update 5:10 p.m.: The Associated Press [reports](#) that authorities have shuttered cell-phone service in Boston “to prevent any potential remote detonations of explosives”—an understandable precaution that will unfortunately do nothing to alleviate the atmosphere of fear and unease in the city. If you’re still trying to reach friends and family, or have information about anyone’s whereabouts, try [Google’s helpful person-finder](#).

Update: 5:30 p.m.: For a (much needed and very brief) moment of quasi-levity we turn, reliably as ever, to Fox News. *Ahem*: Shep Smith [would like to correct his earlier report](#) of a bomb at *J.F.K. International Airport*, in New York. The bomb in question was at *J.F.K. Library*, in Boston. Boston and New York are different; so too, libraries and airports. Fox News regrets the error.

Meanwhile, the Boston Police Department would like everyone to do it, and themselves, a favor by [ignoring](#) (especially now, but probably also forever, while they’re at it) any and all self-described information published by *The New York Post*. Per Talking Points Memo:

The New York Post reported that a “Saudi national who suffered shrapnel wounds in today’s blast” has been identified as “a suspect in the Boston Marathon bombing.” The Boston PD spokesperson did not confirm that report. “Honestly, I don’t know where they’re getting their information from, but it didn’t come from us,” said the spokesperson.

Update 5:45 p.m.: [The White House Flickr feed](#)—so far a more reliable news source than, say, *The New York Post*—has published a photo of Barack Obama speaking with F.B.I. Director Robert Mueller. Both look about as miserable as everyone else following this story. The president will brief the nation on today’s in 20 minutes, at 6:10 p.m.



By Pete Souza.

Another digital silver lining: *The New York Times*, as it is wont to do in times of national emergency, [has lifted its paywall](#).

Update 5:50 p.m.: Whoa. Eric Twardzik, a journalist in Boston, [tweets](#) a photo of what he describes as a “man bound by B.P.D. officers” on the lawn of the Boston Common. CNN [is characterizing](#) today’s events as the “1st terrorist attack on U.S. soil in years.” It will be interesting to see how the network is defining “terrorist attack,” given the very recent series of mass murders.



Courtesy of Eric Twardzik

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