Britain may deport terror suspects

by UPI

LONDON -- Most of the men arrested in last week's anti-terrorist operation will be deported from Britain rather than charged, senior counter-terrorism officials said.

Officials in London and Islamabad, Pakistan, said British officials have begun seeking assurances about how the men would be treated if they were returned to Pakistan, The Times of London reported Monday.

"The British wanted to be reassured that if some of these men were deported they would not face torture," an source in Pakistan told the Times.

Investigators have expressed concern that they have not found firm evidence tying the men to terrorist attack plans. A person close to the inquiry told the Times, "There is already talk of coming up empty-handed and there is terrible in-fighting between the different forces involved."

Operation Pathway led to the resignation of Britain's top anti-terrorist officer, Scotland Yard's Bob Quick, after he accidentally revealed details of the arrest plans to photographers while going to brief British Prime Minister Gordon Brown last week.

The discussions between London and Islamabad were revealed as reports emerged from Pakistan that its anti-terrorist officials had been holding a British convert to Islam for two weeks. James McLintock, 44, was arrested in Peshawar and questioned about aiding British Muslim militants make contacts in Pakistan. Pakistani and British officials said McLintock's arrest was not linked to the terrorism investigation in Britain.

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