

Company 'scoops' U.S. al-Qaida tracking

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- A private U.S. intelligence company that was ahead of the government in monitoring al-Qaida activities says the disclosure has ruined its access. Rita Katz, founder of the SITE Intelligence Group, told the Washington Post her company alerted U.S. intelligence community last Sept. 7 it had tracked down an unseen videotape online of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. Soon after, the video was appearing and being described in the media. Katz said that was a major blow to her company, as al-Qaida members became aware of the weakness in their system. "Techniques that took years to develop are now ineffective and worthless," Katz said. The tape shows bin Laden urging the world to convert to Islam and predicting failure for the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In an e-mail to intelligence officials when the video was discovered, Katz showed the Post the transcript that clearly asked for secrecy. "Please understand the necessity for secrecy," Katz wrote. "We ask you not to distribute ...(as) it could harm our investigations."

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