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1. Here is what I have learned about the death of al-Qaeda's heir-in-waiting Hamza bin Laden, whose killing was first reported by NBC's [@ckubeNBC](#):



2. According to a US official I trust, Hamza bin Laden, the favorite son of Osama bin Laden, died of injuries sustained in an airstrike sometime in December 2017. He died in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. That date is important.

3. December 2017 is the date when al-Qaida announced the death of Hamza bin Laden's 13-year old son Osama, named after Osama bin Laden. Were father and son together and Hamza succumbed to his injuries later? I wasn't able to confirm.



4. One of the puzzling things is that al-Qaeda never claimed bin Laden's death. The group usually claims its "martyrs" & issues obituaries. But none has been issued. Why? A source I trust says chatter was picked up indicating that al-Qaeda hid his death for a practical reason
5. Hamza bin Laden, who carries the most famous name in terrorism, was a boon to al-Qaeda's fundraising efforts. As former FBI special agent [@Ali_H_Soufan](#) explained to me, Hamza was the future of al-Qaeda & the group's hope of reaching out to a younger generation of jihadists.
6. And so the chatter indicates al-Qaeda made a strategic decision to hide his death. Why did the US wait to announce his death until more than 1.5 years later? That isn't clear to me. One more detail: US intel confirmed that Hamza's wife and surviving child left At-Pak for Iran

7. His family left the region around the same time that Hamza is believed to have died in Dec 2017. That was one data point that was used in determining the al-Qaeda heir's alleged death.

8. So from my research, the intel community had two pieces of evidence - 1. Chatter among al-Qaeda operatives where they discussed not announcing his death for fundraising reasons + 2. Family's sudden move.

9. [@Ali H Soufan](#), who has studied this group longer than almost anyone else, urged us to be cautious regarding the news of Hamza's death. My own reporting indicates officials believe he is dead, but are also leaving the door slightly open given that there isn't conclusive proof

10. Finally, Hamza was a big deal for al-Qaeda, but so was his dad. And 8 years after Osama bin Laden's death, al-Qaeda continues to claim lives. One lesson I've learned from watching this group is that they are like an organ that regenerates itself - regardless of who is killed

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