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'You'll suffocate me': Turkish newspaper reveals Khashoggi's last words

Sabah paper says recording was obtained by Turkey's intelligence agency

Associated Press in Ankara

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In his final words, Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi urged his killers not to cover his mouth because he had asthma and could suffocate, according to Turkey's Sabah newspaper.

The newspaper, which is close to Turkey's government, published new details of a recording of Khashoggi's conversation with members of a Saudi hit squad sent to kill him. The paper says the recording of Khashoggi's grisly killing and reported dismemberment on 2 October 2018 at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul was obtained by Turkey's intelligence agency.

According to the transcript, Maher Abdulaziz Mutreb, a member of the Saudi hit squad, tells Khashoggi that he has to be taken back to Riyadh because of an Interpol order against him. The journalist objects, saying there is no legal case against him and that his fiancée is waiting for him outside.

Mutreb and another man are also heard trying to force Khashoggi to send his son a message telling him not to worry if he doesn't hear from him, according to the paper. Khashoggi resists, saying: "I will write nothing."

Mutreb is later heard saying: "Help us, so that we can help you. Because in the end, we will take you to Saudi Arabia. And if you don't help us, you know what will happen in the end."

Sabah also published Khashoggi's last words before he was apparently drugged and lost consciousness.

“Don’t cover my mouth,” he told his killers, according to Sabah. “I have asthma, don’t do it. You’ll suffocate me.”

Some of the details of the transcript published by Sabah were already in a United Nations report on Khashoggi’s murder, released in June. The UN report alleged that Saudi Arabia bore responsibility for the killing and said Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s possible role in the killing should be examined.

Saudi Arabia initially offered multiple, shifting accounts about Khashoggi’s disappearance. As international pressure mounted, the kingdom eventually settled on the explanation that he was killed by rogue officials in a brawl inside their consulate.

The kingdom has put 11 people on trial in non-public proceedings. The 34-year-old prince, who continues to have the support of his father, King Salman, denies any involvement in the killing.

Khashoggi’s remains have never been found.

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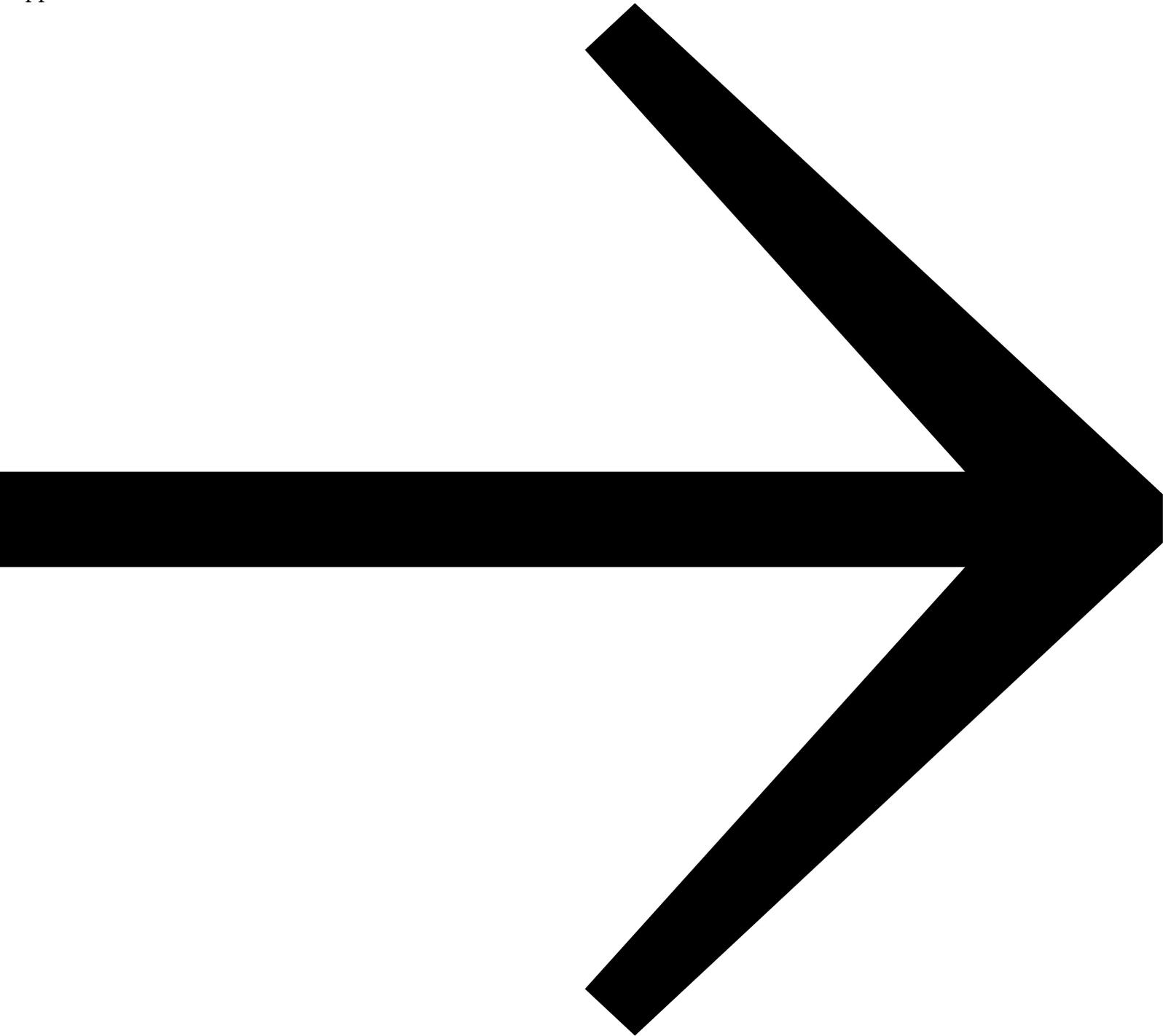
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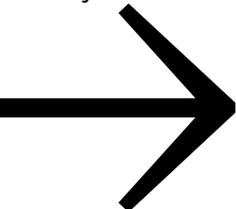


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