

WHY DOES SAUDI ARABIA WANT TO ARREST ONE OF ITS PRINCES?

Morocco arrested a Saudi prince as he was attempting to leave Casablanca's airport and fly to Paris on Thursday. The report on the arrest does not explain why he was arrested – unlike the Saudi prince arrested in the US in September for sexual assault or the Saudi prince arrested in Lebanon in October for having 2 tons of amphetamines in his private plane. Nor does it provide his name (again, unlike those other reports).

But it does say he was arrested on an Interpol warrant issued by Riyadh.

A prince from Saudi Arabia was arrested by Moroccan authorities at Mohammed V Airport in Casablanca on Thursday and placed in custody at the prison of Salé, according to Moroccan daily Al Massae's weekend edition.

The Saudi prince was about to board a Casablanca-Paris flight when border police discovered that his identity matched that of a man wanted by Interpol office in Saudi Arabia for whom an international arrest warrant had been issued.

It's unusual that Saudi Arabia arrests a member of the royal family, and when I read it I wondered whether it might be tied to recent calls for a coup. I think that's still a possibility.

Equally likely, it relates to that massive drug bust in Lebanon last month. That would be interesting because that bust involved Captagon, a drug closely tied to ISIS.

They were allegedly “attempting to smuggle about two tons of Captagon pills and some cocaine”, a security source was quoted as saying.

Captagon is a brand name for the widely used amphetamine phenethylamine.

[snip]

It is the drug of choice for front-line fighters on both sides in the Syrian war, allowing a heightened state of alertness.

It is unclear where the pills allegedly found in Beirut were ultimately to be sold, although the plane was said to be heading back to Saudi Arabia.

In any case, I don't have any theory on this arrest right now, but in retrospect wanted to note the arrest here.