

## 5 HUNTED MEN LINKED TO FAKE PASSPORT RING

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### **Body**

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The five illegal aliens wanted for questioning by the FBI's counterterrorist squad may be connected to a forgery ring, officials said yesterday.

The FBI had no information that the men were connected to terrorist activity, the officials emphasized.

The FBI wants to question the men - believed to be Pakistani - in its probe of a group that makes false documents and passports.

"During the course of that investigation, these men came to our attention," bureau spokesman Edwin Cogswell said. "We developed information that they were going to enter the U.S. on or about Dec. 24. We don't have any specific information that they're connected to an attack or anything, but we're attempting to locate them."

Cogswell said the FBI has no reason to believe the men are ringleaders or manufacturers of the bogus documents, but they may be lower-level conspirators.

He said the feds were not sure they were in the U.S., but Gov. Pataki said yesterday that they entered New York State from Canada on or near Christmas Eve.

"We don't know where they are now," Pataki said.

The New York FBI office was monitoring the situation, primarily because the Times Square New Year's Eve celebration is always considered a potential terrorist target.

The FBI said the men were using the names Abid Noraiz Ali, Iftikhar Khozmai Ali, Mustafa Khan Owasi, Adil Pervez and Akbar Jamal.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said, "We want to know why they are here. We want to question them . . . and find out more."

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