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## French authorities say Paris terror mastermind returned to attack sites that night

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The alleged mastermind behind this month's Paris terror attacks that killed 130 people and injured 350 more took an active part in the carnage and even returned to the scenes of the assaults to examine his handiwork, French authorities said Tuesday.

Paris prosecutor Francois Molins said that investigators believe Abdelhamid Abaaoud doubled back to the sites of the bloodshed Nov. 13, including the Bataclan concert hall, even while special police forces were still there.

"The geolocalization of Abdelhamid Abaaoud's alleged phone between [10:28 p.m.] and [12:28 a.m.] confirms a presence in the 12th, 11th, and 10th districts, and notably near the Bataclan concert hall," Molins said. "This allows us to think that Abdelhamid Abaaoud returns to the crime scenes following the attacks on terraces of the cafes and restaurants of the 10th and 11th districts while (special police) were still taking action at the Bataclan." Three attackers killed 89 people at the music venue after opening fire during a concert by the American rock group Eagles of Death Metal.

Molins also said that Abaaoud was believed to be one of three people traveling in a Black Seat Leon who gunned down diners in a series of cafes on the Right Bank of the Seine River the night of the attacks. Investigators allege that Abaaoud returned to the scenes of the crimes via the Paris Metro system after abandoning the car on the outskirts of the city.

Molins also said that Abaaoud had been in Paris for at least two days prior to the attacks, contrary to the belief by France's security services that he was in Syria.

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Authorities also believe that Abaaoud and at least one accomplice planned to carry out another suicide bombing in La Defense, the business district of Paris located on the western edge of the city. Molins said investigators think the attack was planned for Nov. 18 or 19.

However, Abaaoud was killed during a police raid on an apartment in a northern Paris suburb in the early hours of Nov. 18. His female cousin, Hasna Ait Boulahcen, died of asphyxia apparently from the explosive vest detonated by a third person, who hasn't been identified, the prosecutor said. Molins said the third person was likely Abaaoud's co-conspirator in the planned La Defense attack.

The prosecutor said he "can't be, and doesn't want to be more precise" on the details suggesting such an attack had been planned.

The attacks in Paris, claimed by the ISIS terror group, have been traced to a network of people with ties to both France and Belgium, where Abaaoud was from. Belgian authorities charged a fifth suspect Tuesday with terror-related offenses relating to the Paris attack, while the federal prosecutor's office issued an international arrest warrant for Mohamed Abrini, who is being tracked by both Belgian and French police. Abrini, who has been described as "armed and dangerous," was seen with Salah Abdeslam — another top fugitive suspect in the attacks who crossed into Belgium the day after the killings — at a gasoline station in Ressons on the highway to Paris two days before the attacks. An international arrest warrant has also been issued for Abdeslam.

Investigators now believe Abdeslam served as a courier for three suicide bombers who blew themselves up outside France's national soccer stadium during a friendly match between France and Germany, killing themselves and a passerby. After dropping off those attackers in the suburb of Saint-Denis, investigators believe the plan called for Abdeslam to detonate his own explosive vest at an unknown site in Paris' 18th district. For some reason, Abdeslam never did so, throwing the vest in a garbage heap before fleeing to Belgium in a car with two associates. The discarded vest was found by a street cleaner Monday in the southern Paris suburb of Montrouge.

On Tuesday, a judge also handed down terrorism-related charges to Jawad Bendaoud, the only person so far in France known to be facing such charges directly linked to the Nov. 13 attacks. He was charged with criminal association and detention of incendiary or explosive substances linked to a terrorist enterprise.

Bendaoud acknowledged in a television interview giving shelter to two people from Belgium in his home in Saint-Denis but said he didn't know who they were. The prosecutor differed and said his suspected links with the attackers were being investigated.

*Fox News' Greg Palkot and the Associated Press contributed to this report.*



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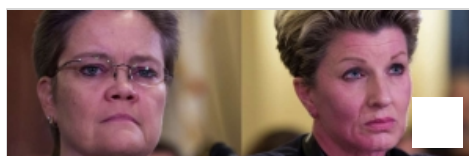
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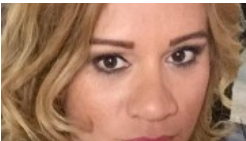
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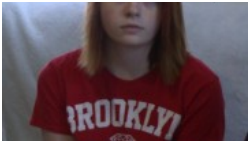
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