

Paris Suspect Abrini Caught, Linked to Brussels Bombings

John Martens Aoife White
aoifewhite101

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- ▶ Abrini captured in Anderlecht borough of the Belgian capital
- ▶ Authorities verifying whether Abrini is third airport attacker

Belgian authorities captured Paris attacks suspect Mohamed Abrini and disclosed evidence that he also was involved in the March 22 suicide bombings in Brussels.

Abrini, who was apprehended on Friday in the Brussels borough of Anderlecht, had been sought since November after he was seen on video footage driving Salah Abdeslam on the French A1 highway on Nov. 11 in a Renault Clio that was used in the Paris attacks two days later. Abrini's fingerprints and DNA were retrieved from the Renault Clio and also from safe houses in Rue Max Roos and Rue Henri Berge in the Schaerbeek district of Brussels, the Belgian federal prosecutor's office said late Friday.

The residence at Rue Max Roos was used by the attackers who blew themselves up at the Brussels Airport on March 22. Investigators are verifying whether Abrini "can be positively identified as the third person present during the attacks" at the airport, the so-called man with the hat seen on surveillance tape with the two suicide bombers, Eric van der Sypt, spokesman for the prosecutor's office, told a press conference in Brussels.

Abrini was detained along with two other suspects, Van der Sypt said, without identifying the other two.

Close Links

The detention of Abrini, 31, provides the latest clue in the strong connection between the Nov. 13 Paris attacks and the bombings in the Belgian capital four months later. Close links had already been established as [Najim Laachraoui](#), whose DNA was found on explosive devices used in Paris, was identified as one of two suicide bombers at the airport. Khalid El Bakraoui, the suicide bomber at the Maelbeek subway station in Brussels, had rented a house near Charleroi that served as a hideout for the Paris attackers.

Belgian authorities also apprehended a suspect identified as Osama K., with alias Naim Al Ahmed, on

Friday. “The investigators are now verifying whether Osama K. can be positively identified as being the second person present at the time of the attack in the Maelbeek subway station,” Van der Sypt said.

This second person was seen with Khalid El Bakraoui a while before he blew himself up in the subway, he said. This person also was filmed at the City 2 shopping mall in Brussels buying bags that were used in the attacks at the airport.

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