

Two more charged over Brussels bombings

Two men are charged with aiding suicide bombers as another three are held in connection with November's Paris attacks

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Two men have been charged with offences related to the Brussels bombings and three others have been detained in connection with the Paris attacks, Belgian authorities said on Tuesday.

The Belgian federal prosecutor's office said the two who have been charged, identified only as Smail F and Ibrahim F, were involved in renting an apartment in the Etterbeek area of Brussels that served as a hideout for the bomber who attacked the Brussels metro on 22 March as well as a suspected accomplice.

It said the detention of the three related to the Paris attacks followed a morning search in the Uccle district of the Belgian capital. A judge will decide on Wednesday whether the three people should remain in custody, and it said no further information would be made public about the search.

Brussels was home to many of the attackers who struck the French capital on 13 November killing 130 victims. According to Belgian and French investigators, the same cell was behind the 22 March suicide bombings that killed 32 victims in Brussels.

An investigating magistrate on Monday ordered Smail F, born in 1984, and Ibrahim F, born in 1988, to be held on charges of participating in the activities of a terrorist group, terrorist murder and attempted terrorist murder as perpetrators, co-perpetrators or accomplices, the prosecutors' office said in a statement.

Prosecutors could not immediately be reached for further comment, but the state-run RTBF broadcaster, citing information from unspecified sources, reported that the two suspects were brothers, and that the older sibling had rented the apartment on the rue des Casernes, while the younger brother helped empty and clean it following the attacks.

Belgian police searched the Etterbeek apartment on Saturday but found no weapons or explosives.

The statement from prosecutors said the investigation "is continuing actively day and night".

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