

France: Police raided 168 properties across the country

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Only hours before, Parisians had fled in panic, trampling through memorial candles and messages to the dead, after hearing apparent gunshots that turned out to be fireworks.

But city authorities vowed amid a state of emergency to resume normal life. Children went to school and the Eiffel Tower reopening to tourists after a two-day shutdown. The tower was being floodlit at night in the red, white and blue of the French tricolor along with a projection of Paris' motto of "Tossed but not sunk," suggesting an unsinkable city tossed in the waves.

But as France intensified its air strikes on suspected IS power bases in Syria, police struggled to achieve a breakthrough in their hunt for those linked to France's deadliest attacks since World War II.

France wants to unite with the U.S. and Russia in a grand coalition dedicated to smashing the Islamic State group, Hollande told lawmakers Monday in a rare joint session in the Palace of Versailles as authorities worldwide struggled to pinpoint those responsible for the deadliest attacks on France since World War II.

"The faces of the dead people, of the wounded, of the families don't leave my mind," Hollande declared after France and many allies observed a minute of silence in honor of the 129 killed and 350 wounded when three teams of IS attackers targeted the national stadium, a rock concert and four night-spots Friday with assault gun fire and suicide bombs.

"In my determination to combat terrorism, I want France to remain itself. The barbarians who attack France would like to disfigure it. They will not make it change," Hollande declared. "They must never be able to spoil France's soul."

As darkness fell it was floodlit in the red, white and blue of the French tricolor along with a projection of Paris' motto of "tossed but not sunk," suggesting an unsinkable city tossed in the waves.

Hollande said the United States and Russia needed to set aside their policy divisions over Syria and "fight this terrorist army in a single coalition." He said he hoped to meet soon with U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian leader Vladimir Putin, though he didn't specify whether they would all meet together.



Buddhist monks pay respect next to the Bataclan, in Paris, France, Monday. French police raided more than 150 locations overnight as authorities released the names of two more potential suicide bombers involved in the Paris attacks: one born in Syria, the other a Frenchman wanted as part of a terrorism investigation.

Francois Mori/AP Photo

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Francois Hollande

French president

In neighboring Belgium, police donning balaclavas and assault rifles mounted a tense hours-long standoff outside the suspected hideout of 26-year-old Salah Abdeslam, who has been identified as the alleged driver of a rental car that delivered attackers to the scene of greatest slaughter, a rock concert inside a nightclub in which 89 died.

That car, rented by Abdeslam, was found abandoned on Paris' east side with several assault rifles and clips of ammunition still inside.

French border police had stopped him Saturday but unwittingly allowed Abdeslam to travel on to Belgium, unaware of an arrest warrant that had been issued in Paris that described him as extremely dangerous.

Police who raided an apartment in the Brussels district of Molenbeek believed to be connected to Abdeslam apparently came up empty Monday after storming the residence, apparently firing tear gas canisters to subdue anyone inside. Police and other Belgian officials said they could not confirm any sig-

nificant arrests at the scene.

One of Abdeslam's brothers, Brahim, blew himself up outside a Paris restaurant, also killing one civilian, during Friday night's attacks involving six suicide bombers. His other brother, Mohammed, was detained by Belgian police but released without charge Monday. His lawyer Nathalie Gallant said that, unlike his two brothers, Mohammed Abdeslam "didn't make the same life choice" and had not been "tempted into jihadism."

Across France, police utilizing emergency powers said they raided 168 properties and detained 23 people in search of members of a suspected sleeper cell of Islamic State activists. French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said police seized a Kalashnikov assault rifle and other weapons during the overnight raids.

A French official, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said police had identified the suspected mastermind as Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a Belgian national believed to be operating in Syria. He is featured in a 2014

video apparently taken in Syria boasting of carrying a cargo of killed "infidels" in the back of his vehicle.

The official, who has direct knowledge of the police investigation but is not authorized to speak publicly about the probe, said Abaaoud also is suspected of overseeing two thwarted attacks earlier this year on a Paris church and a Paris-bound train. The latter attack was stopped by American passengers who restrained a gun-toting man before he could open fire.

In hopes of killing Islamic State organizers and trainees, France overnight launched its heaviest airstrikes yet on the city of Raqqa, the group's de-facto capital in Syria. French authorities said Sunday night's bombings destroyed a jihadi training camp and munitions dump.

The Defense Ministry said in a statement that 12 aircraft based in Jordan and the Persian Gulf dropped a total of 20 bombs. It called the operation the largest attack by French air power since France in September joined the U.S.-led coalition in targeting suspected IS power bases in Syria.

Tantalizing clues about the extent of the plot have emerged from Baghdad, where senior Iraqi officials told the AP that France and other countries had been warned Thursday of an imminent attack.

An Iraqi intelligence dispatch warned that Islamic State group leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi had ordered his followers to launch gun and bomb attacks immediately and take hostages inside those countries involved in bombing IS positions in Iraq and Syria.

The Iraqi dispatch, obtained by the AP, provided no details on when or where the attack would take place.

A senior French security official told the AP that French intelligence services receive such warnings "every day."

However, Iraqi intelligence officials told the AP that they provided specifics to France, including that attackers had been trained specifically for Friday's attack and deployed from Raqqa.

The officials also said a sleeper cell in France met the attackers before their attack and helped them to plan it. They said 24 people were involved: 19 attackers and five who provided logistics and planning.

None of those Iraqi details have been corroborated by officials from France or other Western intelligence agencies. All spoke on condition of anonymity, citing the ongoing investigation.

Harrowing accounts of survival continued to emerge, particularly from the Bataclan theater, where three attackers shot into the fleeing crowd. Two then detonated suicide vests as police stormed the building, fatally shooting the third attacker.

Julien Pearce, a journalist at Europe 1 radio who escaped by crawling onto the Bataclan stage, said he got a good look at one attacker who appeared "very young."

"That's what struck me: his childish face, very determined, cold, calm, frightening," Pearce said.

Paris remains on edge amid three days of official mourning. French troops have deployed by the thousands in support of police to restore a sense of security in one of the most visited cities on Earth. But any sound of loud bangs can send people scurrying for cover.

Panic ensued Sunday night as police abruptly cleared hundreds of mourners from the Place de la Republique square, where police said firecrackers sparked a false alarm.

"Whoever starts running starts everyone else running," said a city councilwoman, Alice Carton, who was at the square. "It's a very weird atmosphere. The sirens and screaming are a source of fear."

Taxes: Pay-by-the-mile tax option was also discussed

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state treasury official. Potiowsky was involved in producing a carbon tax issue paper under a contract with the Legislative Revenue Office.

The panel discussed the following points:

- Under the state Constitution, any tax on motor vehicle fuel and ownership and operations of vehicles must be used for construction, maintenance and operations of public roadways. As a result, any carbon tax imposed at the pump would end up in the state highway fund.

- A carbon tax would not discourage people from driving — and thus would not reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation — unless it is set at a high rate, according to Travis Brouwer, assistant director of the Oregon Department of Transportation. Brouwer said the relationship between a carbon tax and emissions reductions is important, "given the concerns we've heard around the low-carbon fuel standard, and the potential of the Legislature trying to look at alternatives to the low-carbon fuel standard."

- A carbon tax could be more costly for rural Oregonians, who drive longer distances and have fewer transportation options. However, the state could charge different amounts in different areas of the state. "The use of fuels in the metro area, that is where you collect all the revenue, really," Potiowsky said,

and policy makers could adjust the amount of the tax in other areas to reduce the burden on rural drivers.

- Industry would oppose a carbon tax. "Oregon is already one of the lowest per capita carbon emitters in the nation, right? So we start to put ourselves at a disadvantage for industries that sell nationally ... Most industry will oppose it," said Gregg Kantor, president and CEO of NW Natural Gas and co-chair of the oversight committee of the governor's transportation panel.

- The finance subcommittee also discussed a pay-by-the-mile tax as an option to pay for highways and other transportation infrastructure.

A state pilot project currently underway allows drivers to choose between a state-run program and two private companies — Azuga and Verizon Telematics — to track their mileage and charge the mileage tax. The private companies track mileage using GPS, while the state does not. The state is also prohibited from selling mileage data, while the private companies can sell the information if they obtain permission from the drivers.

- Brouwer said some people raised privacy concerns about the mileage tax, specifically that the government would be able to track them via GPS.

Nonetheless, Jim Whitty, manager of ODOT's Office of Innovative Partnerships and Alternative Funding, said 28

percent of pilot project participants have so far signed up with the state program and 78 percent chose the private companies. "They're building a business around it," Whitty said of the companies. "They can recruit and choose volunteers. They can sell value-added services because they are building business around this."

- Potiowsky proposed that the state replace the gas tax, as a funding source for transportation infrastructure, with the pay-by-the-mile tax. Then, the state could charge a carbon tax at the pump and would also have to find a way to tax the carbon emissions from electricity used to power electric vehicles.

- At the end of the meeting, Lattimer pitched a revenue concept that wasn't on the agenda: could the state raise revenue by charging bicyclists registration or license fees? Brouwer said such fees would probably cost more to administer than they would bring in, but a more feasible option would be an excise tax on sales of bicycles.

"I'm interested in that," Wisbrock said.

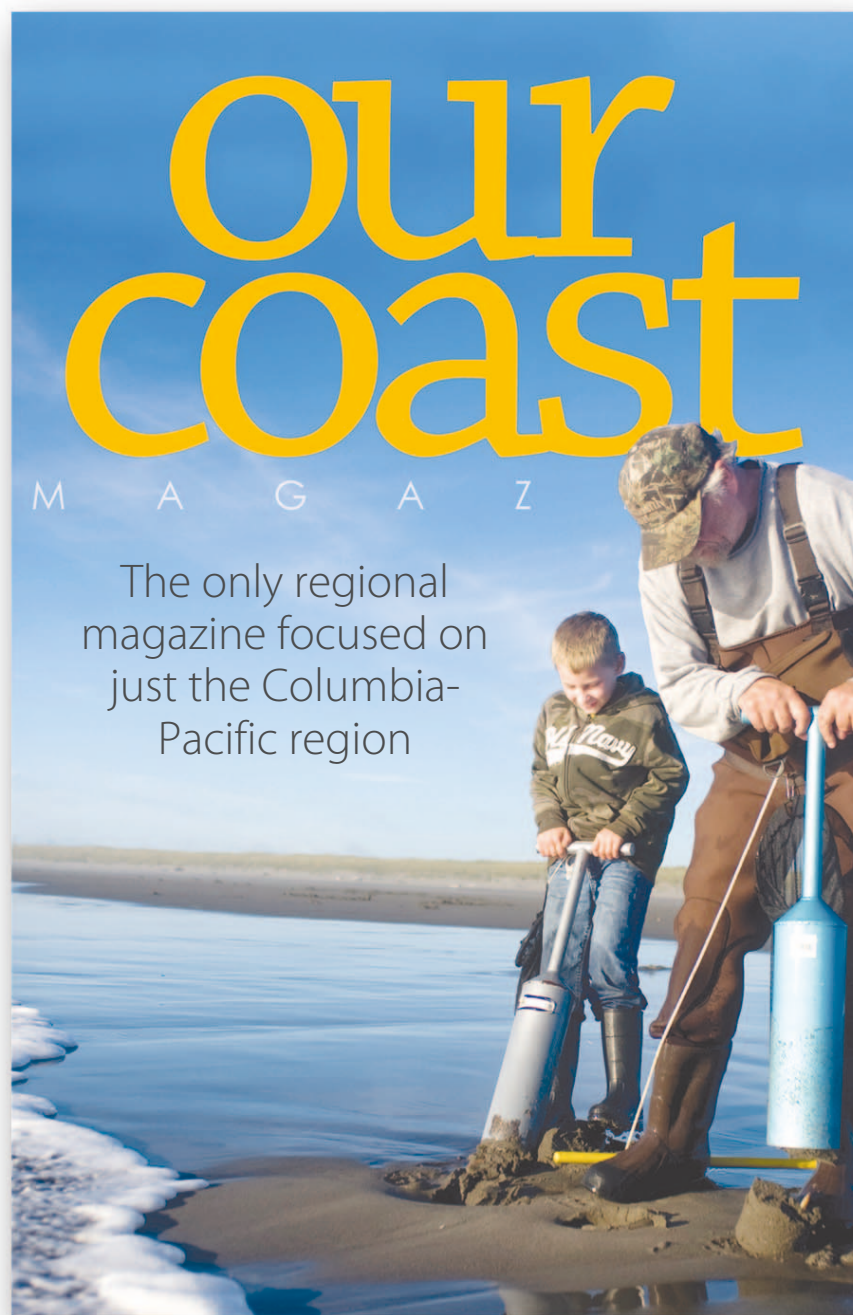
State Sen. Jackie Winters, R-Salem, who attended the meeting, said such a tax could generate goodwill among automobile advocates. "On the flip side, you'd get some cheers on the auto side," Winters said.

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