

# Arrests provide new links between Paris, Brussels attacks

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BRUSSELS — The arrest Friday of five men suspected of links to the Brussels bombings, including the last known fugitive in last year's Paris attacks, raised new questions about the extent of the Islamic State cell believed to have carried out the intertwined attacks that left 162 people dead in two countries.

After weeks of speculation about a mysterious "man in the hat" who escaped the Brussels attacks while three suicide bombers blew themselves up, authorities were checking whether that man was indeed Mohamed Abrini, the last identified suspect at large from the Paris attacks until Friday. Another man arrested in a series of raids, identified as Osama K. by Belgian authorities, was linked to the Nov. 13 Paris attacks by French authorities on March 22, hours after the Belgium attacks.

Abrini and Osama K. are now suspected of playing a role in the two biggest attacks carried out by the Islamic State group in Europe over the past year, killing 130 people in Paris and 32 in Brussels. French authorities renewed their call to arrest an armed and dangerous Abrini within hours of the Brussels attacks.

"We are investigating if Abrini



Sebastian Kamran via AP  
**In this image made from video, police arrest a man in the Anderlecht area of Brussels, Friday.**

can be positively identified as the third person present during the attacks in Brussels National Airport, the so called "man in the hat," said prosecutor Eric Van der Sypt.

The man walked away from the airport attack, where two suicide bombers blew themselves up, killing 16.

Authorities detained four other men on Friday, including Osama K., suspected of having contact with the suicide bomber who blew

himself up in the Brussels subway the same morning, killing another 16.

Osama K. was filmed by security cameras in the City 2 shopping mall when the bags were bought that were used by the suicide bombers who attacked the airport.

Belgian prosecutors said Abrini's fingerprints and DNA were not only in a Renault Clio used in the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris, but also in an apartment in the Schaerbeek area

of Brussels used by the Brussels bombers.

Friday's detentions were a rare success for Belgian authorities, who have been accused for months of mishandling the investigation. Both the interior and justice ministers had offered to resign before the detentions.

Despite multiple arrests, Brussels remains under the second-highest terror alert, meaning an attack is considered likely.

Abrini's precise role in the Paris attacks has never been clear, nor his full link to the Brussels attacks. Abrini is a 31-year-old Belgian-Moroccan, known as a petty criminal before he was believed to have traveled last summer to Syria, where his younger brother died in 2014 in the Islamic State's notorious francophone brigade.

Abrini went multiple times to Birmingham, England, last year, meeting with several men suspected of terrorist activity, a European security official has told The Associated Press. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to provide details on the investigation. He said the meetings, including one later last summer, took place in several locations, including cafes and apartments.

Abrini had not resurfaced since the emergence of surveillance video placing him in the convoy with the attackers headed to Paris. He had ties to Abdelhamid Abbaoud, the ringleader of the Paris attacks who died in a police standoff on Nov. 18, and is a childhood friend of brothers Salah and Brahim Abdeslam, both suspects in the Paris attacks.

Friday was three weeks to the day that authorities arrested in another Brussels neighborhood Salah Abdeslam, who had been on the run for four months. Abdeslam is awaiting extradition to France.

## Global warming now changing how Earth wobbles

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**  
*AP Science Writer*

WASHINGTON — Global warming is shifting the way the Earth wobbles on its polar axis, a new NASA study finds.

Melting ice sheets — especially in Greenland — are changing the distribution of weight on Earth. And that has caused both the North Pole and the wobble, which is called polar motion, to change course, according to a study published Friday in the journal *Science Advances*.

Scientists and navigators have been accurately measuring the true pole and polar motion since 1899 and for almost the entire 20th century they migrated a bit toward Canada. But that has changed with this century and now it's moving toward England, said study lead author Surendra Adhikari at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab.

"The recent shift from the 20th-century direction is very dramatic," Adhikari said.

While scientists say the shift is harmless, it is meaningful. Jonathan Overpeck, professor of geosciences at the University of Arizona who wasn't part of the study, said "this highlights how real and profoundly large an impact humans are having on the planet."

Since 2003, Greenland has lost on average more than 600 trillion pounds of ice a year and that affects the way the Earth wobbles in a manner similar to a



AP Photo/Brennan Linsley, File

**In this 2011 file photo, drops of water fall from a melting iceberg near Nuuk, Greenland.**

figure skater lifting one leg while spinning, said NASA scientist Eirk Ivins, the study's co-author.

Ivins said he likes to think of it as a billion trucks each year dumping ice out of Greenland. On top of that, West Antarctica loses 275 trillion pounds of ice and East Antarctica gains about 165 trillion pounds of ice yearly, helping tilt the wobble further, Ivins said.

They all combine to pull polar motion

toward the east, Adhikari said.

Jianli Chen, a senior research scientist at the University of Texas' Center for Space Research, first attributed the pole shift to climate change in 2013 and he said this new study takes his work a step further.

"There is nothing to worry about," said Chen, who wasn't part of the NASA study. "It is just another interesting effect of climate change."

## Climate change lawsuit by 21 youths takes big step forward

PORTLAND (AP) — The federal government and big energy companies lost an important round Friday in their effort to block a climate change lawsuit by young plaintiffs who contend the U.S. is failing to protect them from the harmful effects of greenhouse gas emissions.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin in Eugene rejected motions by the U.S. government and trade groups representing the energy companies to dismiss the lawsuit by 21 plaintiffs ages 8 to 19.

A U.S. District Court judge has final say over whether the lawsuit will proceed to trial.

Oral arguments before Coffin last month drew hundreds of people who came to show their support for the youths, who contend the release of dangerous carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere is a violation of their constitutional rights.

They are demanding that the U.S. government

be forced to create a plan that would significantly cut the emissions.

"The future of our generation is at stake," one of the plaintiffs, 16-year-old Victoria Barrett, said in a statement released after Coffin's decision by Our Children's Trust, a nonprofit environmental group in Eugene that filed the lawsuit.

"People label our generation as dreamers, but hope is not the only tool we have," the teen said.

Lawyers for energy companies argued that ruling in the plaintiffs' favor would cause them considerable harm, and that they are already subject to many environmental regulations under laws like the federal Clean Air Act.

Coffin wrote in his decision that the debate about climate change and its effects has been before various political bodies for some time now.

### BRIEFLY

#### Prosecutors: Hastert sought to hide sex abuse of 14-year-old

CHICAGO (AP) — Dennis Hastert agreed to pay \$3.5 million to a person the former House speaker sexually abused when the victim was 14 years old and Hastert worked as a high-school teacher and wrestling coach outside Chicago, prosecutors said in a court filing Friday.

The court filing is the first time prosecutors have confirmed Hastert paid hush-money to conceal sex abuse of a 14-year-old — a person who has been identified in court documents as Individual A. Prosecutors are seeking up to six months in prison for Hastert.

According to the document, Individual A told prosecutors the abuse occurred in a hotel room on the way home from a trip to wrestling camp. Between 10 and 14 boys were on the trip. Hastert, the only adult on the trip, told the 14-year-old that he would stay in his room while the other boys stayed in a different room. Individual A said Hastert touched him inappropriately after suggesting he would massage a groin injury the boy had complained about earlier.

The 74-year-old Republican managed to keep any hint of sexual misconduct quiet throughout a political career that carried him from the Illinois Legislature to the halls of Congress and eventually to the speaker's office, where he was second in the line of

succession to the presidency.

Hastert pleaded guilty in October to breaking banking laws as he sought to pay \$3.7 million to someone referred to as Individual A to ensure the person kept quiet about Hastert's past misconduct.

He is scheduled to be sentenced April 27.

#### Ex-Navy SEAL who says he killed bin Laden charged with DUI

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — The former Navy SEAL who says he fired the shots that killed Osama bin Laden was arrested Friday on a drunken driving charge after police found him asleep in a car parked at a convenience store in his Montana hometown.

Customers at the store in Butte called police to report a sleeping man behind the wheel of the running car around 2:30 a.m., Butte-Silver Bow County Undersheriff George Skuletich said. The officer who responded woke the man up, identified him as Robert O'Neill and noticed odd behavior.

"He was confused. His actions were consistent with somebody who might be under the influence of something," Skuletich said. O'Neill denied drinking, gave different stories about where he had been and at one point told the officers he had taken prescription medication to help him sleep, Skuletich said.

O'Neill failed a field sobriety test and would not perform others.

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