

Suspect says imam planned to blow himself up in Barcelona

MADRID (AP) — An extremist cell was preparing bombs for an imam who planned to blow himself up at a Barcelona monument, a key suspect in the attacks that killed 15 people in northeastern Spain told a judge Tuesday, according to a judicial official.

The suspect, Mohamed Houli Chemlal, was one of four men taken before Spain's National Court in Madrid to testify about the Islamic cell that attacked pedestrians in Barcelona and the nearby seaside town of Cambrils last week.

National Court Judge Fernando Andreu questioned the four about the vehicle attacks as well as the fatal explosion at a bomb-making workshop that police said scuttled the group's plot to carry out a more deadly attack at unspecified Barcelona monuments. After the session, the judge ordered two of the surviving suspects held without bail, another detained for 72 more hours and one freed with restrictions.

A Spanish judicial official said Houli Chemlal, 21, and suspect Driss Oukabir, 28, identified imam Abdelbaki Es Satty as the ideological leader of the 12-man cell.

Oukabir and the other two surviving suspects who testified, Mohamed Aalla and Sahal El Karib, denied being part of the cell, said the court official, who was not authorized to discuss the case and insisted on speaking anonymously.

The cell's other eight members are dead. Police shot five during an attack Friday and one more Monday after a manhunt. Es Satty and another accidentally blew themselves up while preparing explosives in a house in the coastal town of Alcanar, south of Barcelona.

Es Satty preached in a mosque in the northeastern town of Ripoll, home to most of the 12 pointed to by police as suspected members of the cell. Police identified his remains amid the rubble



In this combination photo, four un-named alleged members of a terror cell accused of killing 15 people in attacks in Barcelona leaves a Civil Guard base on the outskirts of Madrid before appearing in court in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday. Four men were arrested last week for their alleged involvement in the planning or execution of attacks in Barcelona on Thursday and the northeastern resort town of Cambrils early Friday.



A policeman hugs a boy and his family during the terrorist attack, at a memorial to the victims on Las Ramblas, Barcelona, Spain, Monday.

of the Aug. 16 explosion that destroyed the house in Alcanar.

Police found in the house over 100 tanks of butane gas and materials to make TATP, an explosive frequently used in attacks by Islamic State militants. The group has claimed responsibility for both attacks on pedestrians — one Thursday by a van that mowed down people on Barcelona's famed Las Ramblas promenade and another early Friday in Cambrils. The attacks and a bloody getaway in which a man was stabbed to death left 15 dead and over 120 wounded.

Houli Chemlal, the only survivor of the Alcanar blast, told the court Tuesday that he is alive because he was on the ground floor of the

house washing dishes after dinner. He testified from a wheelchair without lifting his eyes up from the ground, according to the court official. He has been hospitalized under guard since his arrest Thursday.

The second suspect interrogated, Oukabir, testified he rented the vans used in the attacks on pedestrians but said he thought they were going to be used for a house move. His brother Moussa was one of the five radicals shot dead Friday by police in Cambrils.

According to another person who attended Tuesday's interrogation, Oukabir told the prosecutor that his first version of events — telling police his documents were stolen by his brother — was something he had done

out of fear. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the hearing.

The third suspect, Aalla, said an Audi A3 used in last week's attack in Cambrils was registered under his name but used by another sibling, the judicial official said. Police say one of Aalla's younger brothers died in Cambrils and another one is believed to be the second casualty in the Alcanar house blast where the imam died.

The last surviving suspect, El Karib, the owner of a cybercafe in Ripoll, told the judge that he was only trying to make a profit when he bought at least two plane tickets for two alleged members of the cell.

Police later Tuesday raided the cybercafe in Ripoll as well as a house in Vilafranca del Penedes, searching for more evidence.

After the questioning, the judge said there was enough evidence to hold Houli Chemlal and Oukabir on preliminary charges of causing homicides and injuries of a terrorist nature and of belonging to a terrorism organization. Houli Chemlal also has an additional charge of dealing with explosives.

However, the judge ruled the evidence was "not solid enough" to keep holding Aalla, who was freed on condition he appear in court weekly, relinquish his passport and not leave Spain.

MARIJUANA: Board will also discuss life insurance

Continued from 1A

the Board of Trustees, the governing body who set policy and make final decisions on tribal affairs.

Although Oregon voters legalized recreational marijuana in 2014 and Pendleton voters legalized marijuana sales in 2016, marijuana remains illegal on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

If the board refers the issue to voters and they approve it, the CTUIR wouldn't be the first tribes to embrace cannabis.

According to *The Oregonian*, two tribes in Washington signed agreements to operate marijuana stores. Additionally, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation in Central Oregon grow and cultivate its own marijuana, although its sold off-site at stores in Portland and Bend.

Marijuana isn't the only issue the Board of Trustees will consider putting on the ballot.

Sams said the General Council has also recommended a referendum on a tribally owned life insurance policy.

If approved by voters, the \$50,000 policy would be offered by the tribal government exclusively to tribal members.

Although it was discussed at the board level, Sams said a referendum on universal basic income will not be on the November ballot because it didn't meet the tribes' constitutional notice requirements.

Universal basic income is a concept being studied around the world where citizens get an income from the government in perpetuity with no strings attached.

Since the universal basic income referendum never made it past the idea stage, Sams said there aren't any specifics regarding a CTUIR income program, although it could be considered for future election beyond November.

The board will meet Monday to consider the marijuana and life insurance ballot referendums. Both will be considered in the tribal session, rather than the open portion of the meeting, although the board's decision could be announced after the meeting concludes.

WASTEWATER: Next step is to seek grants, loans to build pipeline

Continued from 1A

to take the treated water if the numbers penciled out for both cities. He said Stanfield had the capacity to handle the extra water and still have room to grow.

Echo's recycled water is currently emptied into the Umatilla River after treatment, but does not meet Department of Environmental Quality standards for biological oxygen demand. The city is on its 12th year and sixth extension of a mutual agreement to allow the practice to continue as it searches for solutions, but the state has warned that it will not continue extending the agreement indefinitely, and failure to extend the agreement would result in significant fines for Echo.

City Manager Diane Berry said Echo's next step after Stanfield formally signs off on the agreement is to seek grants and loans to build a pipeline to a sewer manhole near the Pilot Travel Center in Stanfield and to fund "the other required and needed improvements."

Berry said the option

of sending wastewater to Stanfield had been rejected years ago because at the time the volume of water was too cost-prohibitive. However, new evaporation fountain technology that has since become readily available, which Echo plans to incorporate into its upgrade, will greatly reduce the volume. She said the city is also giving Echo a reduced price because it will only be sending treated water, not untreated sewage, making the deal "possible and affordable."

According to the agreement — which could end up being modified if the Stanfield City Council has objections — Echo is expected to discharge no more than 60,000 gallons per day, with 75 percent of the discharge taking place between Nov. 1 and May 1. The city will pay \$2.25 per thousand gallons and the deal will be subject to renegotiation if Stanfield reaches more than 85 percent of its sewer system capacity.

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ECLIPSE: Fossil fairground sold out all campsites

Continued from 1A

pleased," Strandberg said. "We got our message out there."

The U.S. Forest Service was also pretty pleased with how campers behaved as they gathered to watch the eclipse in the woods. Mike Stearly, spokesman for the Malheur National Forest, said they filled every campground in and around the path of totality, including as many as 300 people in the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness.

The biggest concern heading into the weekend was the risk of wildfires amid extreme fire danger. All three Blue Mountains national forests — the Umatilla, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur — are currently in Phase C public use restrictions, which includes a complete ban on campfires.

Stearly said the forest did a large fire prevention campaign in advance of the eclipse rush, and by the end they had reported no new human-caused fires.

It was a similar situation on the neighboring Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, where spokesman Chris Bentley said they set up five public information stations to notify out-of-town campers about the burn ban and other regulations.

Like the Malheur forest, Bentley said the Wallowa-Whitman managed to navigate the eclipse without any major emergencies.

"We like to plan for the worst and be pleasantly surprised," he said.

Jena Knowles, public relations director for the Blue Mountain Hospital in John Day, said they originally planned for heavy traffic at the hospital, even bringing in outside volunteers to help keep things organized. Instead, she said the weekend was much calmer than they anticipated.

"It was crazy, just how quiet it was," Knowles said.



Lydia Bird of San Francisco adjusts a spotting scope she used to project an image of the eclipse on a white piece of board on Monday in John Day.



Henry Greutert and Katie Mertel, both of Mercer Island, watch the eclipse on Monday in John Day.

"We were prepared for a lot different scenario."

In Wheeler County, Sheriff Chris Humphreys compared the eclipse to what they would normally see during any given Memorial Day Weekend. Monday's mass exodus of people following the eclipse kept them busy, Humphreys said, but nothing they weren't prepared to handle.

"We just put the right amount of planning on this," he said. "This is exactly what we expected."

Humphreys said he was even able to share

some of his officers with neighboring Crook County, where they were dealing with much larger crowds at the Symbiosis Gathering on Big Summit Prairie. With a population of just 1,344, Wheeler County may very well have been overwhelmed if not for a multi-area coordination with Crook, Jefferson and Deschutes counties, Humphreys added.

In Fossil — population 473 — city recorder Jeanne Burch said the county fairgrounds did sell out all 115 available campsites, though crowds never grew

out of hand. Many of the visitors remained in town as of Tuesday, she said, lining up to check out the Fossil Museum and patronizing local businesses.

"They really do seem like they are having a good time," Burch said.

Debbie Starkey, a city councilwoman for the even smaller community of Spray, said they began planning for the eclipse as early as January, with emergency management, law enforcement and economic development all at the table. Though crowds weren't as high as they originally expected, she said no one came away disappointed.

"It was almost folksy, the way things unfolded," Starkey said. "There wasn't the Madras hype that everybody heard about."

Starkey said she felt the town was as prepared as it could be — perhaps even a little over-prepared.

"I don't regret it at all," she said. "We had no issues. There were no problems."

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TRANSPORTATION: Plan includes staggered hikes to gas tax

Continued from 1A

ating an agreement between Republicans and Democrats that would win enough votes to pass the bill, said House Minority Leader Rep. Mike McLane, R-Powell Butte.

"I am happy she is coming here," Bentz said in a phone interview from Ontario Tuesday. "I think it is an important part of the process of sharing with the state the importance of this particular legislation."

Bentz and Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, Malheur County economic development director, both served on the legislative committee that crafted the transportation package.

Smith is guiding planning for development of the reload facility in a proposed industrial park, with a to-be-determined location, *The Argus Observer* reported.

A non-profit corporation is being formed to govern the new facility and hire a manager, according to the *Argus* newspaper.

The eight-year transportation plan includes staggered hikes in the gas tax, increases to registration and title fees, and new taxes on payroll, new vehicle purchases and bicycles priced more than \$200. The package also calls for congestion-priced tolling at some of Portland's bottlenecks, which could include certain lanes on Interstate 5 and Interstate 205, to pay for congestion-busting projects.

Among major projects

specified in the plan are congestion relief on Highway 217, widening northbound I-205 from Powell Boulevard to Interstate 84 and initial investment in adding new lanes to I-5 through Portland's Rose Quarter.

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