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LAW ENFORCEMENT

FBI: Early probe results show 18 hijackers took part

September 13, 2001

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With U.S. authorities saying they believe they have identified most of the hijackers responsible for Tuesday's terrorist attacks, investigators cast an international net for accomplices, believed to be "a significant number."

FBI Director Robert Mueller said a preliminary investigation indicated 18 hijackers were on the four planes -- five on each of the two planes that crashed into the World Trade Center, and four each on the planes that crashed into the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania.

The widening investigation stretched from the Canadian border to Florida, from Pennsylvania into Europe, as U.S. investigators enlisted the help of the international law enforcement community.

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U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft said a team of 4,000 special agents at the FBI, joined by 3,000 support personnel, are working on the largest investigation in U.S. history.

Thousands perished when two hijacked commercial jets slammed into the World Trade Center's twin towers Tuesday morning, causing the 110-story towers to collapse in a terrifying cascade of cement, metal, glass and human bodies. A third jet slammed into the Pentagon and a fourth crashed in rural Pennsylvania.

Among the developments:

-- Attorney General Ashcroft said the pilots who hijacked the four planes were trained in the United States and had ground support.-- Investigators leading the probe of the Pennsylvania jetliner crash said they found a field of debris six miles away from the crash site.

-- German police detained a male airport worker and brought in a woman for questioning in connection with the investigation.

-- A man who had initially been linked by U.S. authorities to Tuesday's terrorist attacks was cooperating with the FBI after his attorney said his identification had been stolen.

No arrests have been made in connection with the deadly hijackings and no suspects have been identified by law enforcement authorities. An unspecified number of people have been detained for violations related to their immigration status.

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