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LAW ENFORCEMENT

FBI: Early probe results show 18 hijackers took part

September 13, 2001

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In Vero Beach, Florida, FBI agents searched four homes in three neighborhoods, according to witnesses.

A tenant in one of those houses, Adnan Bukhari, was cooperating with the federal agents, sources said.

Bukhari's brother, Ameer Bukhari, died in a small plane crash in Florida last year, according to a lawyer for the family.

Federal sources had initially identified the brothers as possible hijackers who had boarded one of the planes that originated in Boston. Their names had been tied to a car founded at an airport in Portland, Maine. But Bukhari's attorney said it appeared their identifications were stolen and said Bukhari had no role in the hijackings.

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In Germany, that nation's top prosecutor said three of the suspected hijackers were of Arab descent and are believed to have lived in Hamburg, where they were members of an alleged terrorist cell.

German police detained a male airport worker and brought in a woman for questioning in connection with the prosecutor's investigation into the attacks.

Multiple cells of terrorist groups participated in the operation and the hijackers had possible ties to countries that included Saudi Arabia and Egypt, The Associated Press reported, citing law enforcement officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Officials said authorities were gathering evidence that the terrorist cells may have had prior involvement in earlier plots against the United States, and may have been involved with Saudi exile Osama bin Laden. That includes the USS Cole bombing in Yemen and the foiled attack on U.S. soil during the millennium celebrations.

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