

# *French Authorities Say Mastermind Behind Paris Attacks Killed*

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Paris, November 19 (RHC)-- The suspected Belgian mastermind of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris has been identified among the dead in Wednesday's police raid in Saint-Denis commune, the Paris prosecutor's office says.

"Abdel Hamid Abaaoud has just been formally identified, after comparing fingerprints, as having been killed during the (police) raid [north of Paris]," the office said in a statement on Thursday. "It was the body we had discovered in the building, riddled with bullets."

French officials had accused the 28-year-old Abaaoud of orchestrating Friday's coordinated bombings and shootings which killed over 130 persons. It was initially thought that Abaaoud was in Syria, but further investigations revealed that he was based in the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis. The Belgian militant had boasted of representing Daesh Takfiri group and mounting attacks in Europe.

Heavily armed police forces launched a raid before dawn on Wednesday to arrest the terrorist. The seven-hour shootout and siege led to the killing of two people in an apartment in Saint Denis, one of them a woman who allegedly killed herself before police commandos managed to break into the house.

The prosecutor had said that the other body was so riddled with bullets that it was difficult to identify him at first.

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