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UNTHINKABLE

Terrorists use knives, box cutters to hijack four planes; World Trade Center destroyed, Pentagon damaged



MOMENT OF HORROR Huge, flying bomb zeros in for its assault on the second World Trade Center tower as the first burns with a fatal fury. The Associated Press



OVERWHELMING TASK In a scene right out of a disaster movie, firefighters make an early, tentative probe of the World Trade Center rubble. The Associated Press

“ We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them. ”



President Bush
In an address to the nation

Death toll seen in thousands; rescue delayed

FROM WIRE REPORTS

A pall of smoke, dust and sadness settled over lower Manhattan at nightfall Tuesday as rescue workers, police and firefighters pressed their desperate search for survivors of the worst terrorist attack in United States history, a coordinated airborne assault that destroyed the twin towers of the World Trade Center and left a portion of the Pentagon in Washington in smoking ruins.

In New York alone, it was feared the death toll could reach the thousands. Officials said at least 300 firefighters and 78 police officers were missing and presumed dead at midday. Upwards of 50,000 people worked in the 110-story World Trade Center towers, reduced by explosions and fire to ruins within hours of the initial attack.

Speaking Tuesday evening from the White House, President Bush evoked a biblical message in saying the United States was walking “through the valley of the shadow of death” but still feared no evil. He described the attack as a mass murder that had ended the lives of thousands of people and called on the nation to remember the victims in its prayers.

Amid reports that investigators were focusing their attention on renegade Saudi exile Osama bin Laden, believed to be in exile in Afghanistan, Bush promised all the government’s resources would be used to find and punish the perpetrators of the attack.

“Today, our nation saw evil,” Bush said. Said Adm. Robert J. Natter, commander of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet: “We have been attacked like we haven’t since Pearl Harbor.”

SEE DISASTER / A7

Bin Laden links start to emerge

By Karen Gullo and John Solomon
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials began piecing together a case linking Osama bin Laden to the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history, aided by an intercept of communications between his supporters and harrowing cell-phone calls from victims aboard the jetliners before they crashed on Tuesday.

Authorities were focusing some of their efforts on possible bin Laden supporters in Florida based on the identification of a suspected hijacker on one of the manifests of the four jets that crashed, law enforcement officials said.

The FBI was preparing to search locations in Broward County in South Florida and the Daytona Beach area in Central Florida, Florida Department of Law Enforcement spokesman Rick Morera said.

The locations had links to the suspected bin Laden supporter on the jet manifest, officials said.

Among the passengers was Barbara Olson, the wife of a top Justice Department official, who called her husband as the hijacking took place.

U.S. intelligence intercepted communications between bin Laden supporters discussing the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, according to

SEE BIN LADEN / A7

THE PENTAGON

Reports suggest that as many as 800 people died in attack on defense headquarters. Still, says top official, “The Pentagon is functioning.”

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NEW YORK CITY

Scenes of devastation, panic and fear unfolded as thousands fled the city on foot.

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TWIN TOWERS

The engineer who designed the World Trade Center said the towers could take a 707 hit.

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THE ECONOMY

Fed official speaking in Tucson says the nation’s financial system is in no danger.

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IN TUCSON

Residents join in widespread prayer; followers of Islam are target of anger; Red Cross seeks blood donations.

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Barbara Olson, a victim, called from a hijacked plane.

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