

Death toll in Russian terror attack climbs to 16

[At least 15 people officers as well as several civilians and a priest](#) were slaughtered by a horde of gunmen as they stormed religious sites and a police traffic stop in a shocking terror attack yesterday in southern Russia.

Horrific footage showed the militants stalking through the streets brandishing automatic rifles before unleashing a torrent of bullets at onlookers and police officers.

The attacks ...unfolded in several locations in the tinderbox region of Dagestan, a largely Muslim region of Russia that borders Georgia and Azerbaijan.

A synagogue in the regional capital Makhachkala was set alight with smoke seen pouring from the building, while another group of attackers set fire to a second synagogue in Derbent, the southernmost city in Russia which lies roughly 80 miles further south.

There the gunmen also attacked a pair of Orthodox churches where they reportedly slit the throat of a priest.



He was later named as 66-year-old Father Nikolai Kotelnikov, who served more than 40 years in Derbent.

Dagestan's regional governor this morning said six 'bandits' had been 'eliminated' as clips showed members of Russia's FSB security service standing over bloodied corpses at the scene of the shootings.



There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but there is evidence to suggest the shootings were an Islamist attack.



Russian state news agency Tass revealed that Magomed Omarov, the head of Dagestan's Sergokalinsky district, was arrested after officers learned two of his sons had taken part in the shootings. One of them reportedly shared a video to the Telegram messaging app in which he could be heard saying he was 'killing infidels' as he declared 'Allahu Akhbar'.

Authorities are now probing Dagestani official Omarov, whose sons Osman, 30, and Adil, 37, were among the gunmen who slaughtered innocent civilians and attacked the places of worship.

Before he was gunned down, Osman posted a chilling video showing the synagogue in Makhachkala on fire, declaring: 'Behold, inshallah...Here is their synagogue burning. Inshallah, Allah be praised, let these infidels... be humiliated. We will kill them like this, humiliate them, and the word of Allah will be exalted. **Inshallah, Allahu Akbar!**'

The [X news company Visegrad](#) says that another of the jihadists was (is?) Ghadzimurad Kagiroy a well known (in MMA circles) fighter of Eagles MMA

Shocking clips circulating on the Telegram messaging app showed how hundreds of civilians desperately fled the scene of the shootings in Derbent, where the attacks knocked out power in the city centre yesterday.

The synagogue attacked and set alight by the gunmen in the city is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and the centrepiece of an ancient Jewish community. The chairman of the public council of Russia's Federation of Jewish Communities, Boruch Gorin wrote late last night that it had not been possible to extinguish the fire at the synagogue. He wrote: 'The synagogue in Makhachkala has also been set on fire and burnt down,' before adding that firefighters at the religious site in Derbent had been told to leave the burning synagogue because of the risk that 'terrorists remained inside'.

Below a screenshot from a TASS video of the damage to the Derbent synagogue, taken from [X via a commentor](#) (who I think is Czech) named Roman



Dagestan regional governor Sergei Melikov said that the situation in the region was now under control of the law enforcement and local authorities. . . He vowed that the investigation will continue until ‘all the sleeping cells’ of the militants are uncovered and claimed, without providing evidence, that the attacks might have been prepared from abroad and referenced what the Kremlin calls ‘the special military operation’ in Ukraine in an apparent attempt to link the attacks.

But former Russian deputy premier Dmitry Rogozin dismissed the bid to slapped blame the West and Ukraine for the bloodbath, as the FSB has sought to do over the attack in Moscow earlier this year. ‘If we write off every terrorist attack, mixed up with national and religious intolerance, hatred and Russophobia, to the intrigues of Ukraine and NATO, this pink fog will lead us to big problems,’ he warned. It was ‘high time’ Moscow realised that Russia has its own homegrown

problems, he said.

Dagestan has seen a series of anti-Semitic events in the past year, most notably when a mob stormed the airport in Makhachkala to search for Jewish passengers from Israel in the weeks following Hamas' October 7 attacks on the Nova music festival in Re'im and several kibbutzim across the border from Gaza.

The Mail reporters seem to be favoring ISIS-K as the likely culprits. I think that supposition is sound.

ISIS-K takes its name from Khorasan – an old Persian term for the region that included parts of Iran, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, as well as areas of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. ISIS-K is capable of operations far from its bases in the borderlands of Afghanistan. It has aggressively recruited in neighbouring regions, particularly in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, to establish a regional network of jihadist fighter cells that could help execute international attacks, according to a January 2024 UN report.