

Philippine military on high alert after bombing called terrorism



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MANILA, Dec 3 (Reuters) – Philippine forces were on high alert on Sunday after a bomb killed four people and wounded several during a Catholic Mass in a university gymnasium in the south of the country, an attack the authorities called Islamist terrorism.

The blast in Marawi, a city besieged by pro-Islamic State militants for five months in 2017, followed the killing of 11 combatants in a military operation on Friday in Maguindanao del Sur some 200 km (125 miles) away.

[Regional](#) military commander Maj Gen Gabriel Viray III said at least four people were killed by the explosion, including three women, and 50 others were brought to two hospitals for treatment of mostly minor injuries.

The explosion caused panic among dozens of worshippers and left the victims bloodied and sprawled on the ground, said Taha Mandangan, the security chief of the sprawling state-run university campus.

At least two of the wounded were fighting for their lives, Mandangan said

Videos posted by DZBB radio on X showed rescuers carrying injured people out of the gym on plastic chairs.

Mindanao State University said in a statement on Facebook it was “deeply saddened and appalled by the act of violence that occurred during a religious gathering. We unequivocally condemn in the strongest possible terms this senseless and horrific act.”

The university said it was suspending classes until further notice.