

Moscow Police Detain Members of Extremist Group

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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OMON riot police troops. **E. Razumny**

Police detained 14 people believed to be members of al-Qaida-linked Islamic extremist group Takfir wal-Hijra and seized a cache of weapons and explosives during a raid in eastern Moscow, the Interior Ministry said.

Officers seized three homemade bombs, components for making other explosives, a stockpile of handguns, munitions, grenades and extremist literature during a joint raid Tuesday night by police, the Federal Security Service, or FSB, and OMON riot police troops, Interfax reported.

Investigators believe that the cell was funded by proceeds from "general crime," the ministry said.

The raid comes as part of government attempts to curtail terrorism amid worries that the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi will be attacked.

Earlier this month, another suspected Takfir wal-Hijra member has been arrested in a Moscow suburb for supposedly recruiting young women to engage in extremist activity.

The Russian citizen is suspected of targeting "shy" young women on the Internet and persuading them to live with him and convert to Islam. During the arrest, officials seized amphetamines and a gun from the suspect's car as well as a supply of radical literature from his apartment.

In October two members of the organization were convicted of plotting a terrorist attack in Tatarstan after returning from fighting with rebel groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

No information about the citizenship or national origin of the 14 suspects detained Tuesday was immediately available.

Takfir wal-Hijra was founded in the 1960s as an offshoot of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood organization, and is now believed to be a network of cells around the world affiliated with al-Qaida.

The Russian Supreme Court declared Takfir wal-Hijra an extremist organization and banned it from the country in 2010.

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