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Security Police Kill Four Militants in Operation in Kyrgyz Capital

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Kyrgyzstan's security police said they had killed four members of an "international terrorist organization" in a firefight near the center of the capital Bishkek on Thursday, underscoring continued volatility in the hard-up Central Asian nation.

Contacted by Reuters, a security police spokesman declined to name the organization.

"Servicemen of the GKNB (police) are now conducting a mopping-up operation and an investigation at the scene," police said in a statement. Four security service members were wounded, it said.

Witnesses said on social media networks that they had heard bursts of machinegun fire and explosions in Gorky Street, about 1.5 km (1 mile) from an area which houses the government and parliament.

Kyrgyzstan, a mainly Muslim nation of 5.5 million which lies on a drug trafficking route out of Afghanistan, is politically volatile. Two presidents have been deposed since 2005 and hundreds died in interethnic bloodshed in its south in 2010.

Russia keeps a military airbase in the country.

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