The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Regions Detain 25 Would-Be Islamic State Recruits in August

September 03, 2015

An Islamic State flag

Twenty-five people were detained in Russia's North Caucasus region in August for attempts to join the feared terrorist organization the Islamic State in Syria, state-run news agency RIA Novosti reported Thursday, citing Sergei Melikov, presidential envoy to the North Caucasus federal district. Most of them were young people, Melikov said.

The Islamic State has succeeded in recruiting people from all over the world, including Russia, where it is mostly active in regions with a sizable Muslim population like the North Caucasus or the republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, the Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday.

Islamic State activity is not, however, limited to those regions. In July, a Muslim organization in Russia's Far East reported there had been attempts to recruit new members in far eastern regions as well, and earlier this summer a female student at the prestigious Moscow State University was reported to have run away to Syria. She was subsequently detained near the Turkey-Syria border and returned to Moscow.

Up to 2,000 Russians are fighting alongside the Islamic State, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in July, though he claimed that hundreds of them had left Russia long ago to take up residency in Europe.

Russian government representatives have repeatedly voiced concern about these fighters eventually returning home.

The Islamic State is a jihadi militant group that has seized control of large swathes of Iraq and Syria, as well as smaller areas of other countries.

It has gained worldwide notoriety for grisly execution videos — some apparently showing young children gunning down individuals that have run afoul of the group's rigid principles, as well as footage of its members destroying revered cultural and religious sites.

The group has likewise claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist attacks, such as the June 26 massacre at a Tunisian resort that claimed 38 lives, including one Russian woman.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/09/03/russia-regions-detain-25-would-be-islamic-state-recruits-in-august-a49335