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Red Terror Alert Declared After Attack in Kazakhstan

By The Moscow Times

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A red terror alert has been announced in Kazakhstan's western city of Aktobe after a deadly overnight attack by gunmen, the Interfax news agency reported Monday.

A group of suspected Islamist militants attacked two gun shops and a national guard base on Sunday. Six people were killed and at least nine injured as a result of attacks in the city, which lies close to Russia's southern border.

Among the victims were three civilians, believed to be a sales assistant, a customer and a security guard at one of the shops. The attackers also killed three soldiers as they tried to enter the military base.

Four of the gunmen were killed by the police, while seven have been detained, the TASS news agency reported, citing Kazakhstan's Interior Ministry spokesman Almas Sadubayev.

The Interior Ministry reported that five more attackers were killed and a further two detained

during anti-terror raids on Monday morning.

“The terrorist attack in Aktobe on the eve of Ramadan is a sign of the extreme cynicism and cruelty of these criminals. We are taking the most stringent measures to punish them,” Chairman of the Kazakh Senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said after the attacks, TASS reported.

The emergency services warned Aktobe residents via text message of ongoing anti-terrorist raids in the city, urging civilians to stay indoors. The red terror level is the highest possible rating within the country.

Public transportation is limited and few people can be seen in the streets, Interfax reported, citing its correspondent in Aktobe. Mobile phone networks have been disrupted and the city is currently without Internet access.

This is not the first time Aktobe has been targeted by terrorists. In 2011, the city became the site of Kazakhstan’s first terror attack when a 25-year old resident detonated a suicide bomb near the city's National Security Commission Department.

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