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Suspected Gang Members Killed in St. Petersburg Raid

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Russia's security services have killed four suspected gang members during a raid on a residential building in St. Petersburg, Russia's Investigative Committee reported Wednesday. The men were on Russia's national wanted list for alleged involvement in illegal armed groups in the North Caucasus region, Investigative Committee spokesperson Vladimir Markin told the Interfax news agency.

The raid took place in an apartment block on the city's Leninsky Prospect, where officers set off two explosions from within the building at 11:30 a.m. Officers were seen carrying a large number of sandbags inside the building, presumably to barricade suspects inside one of the apartments, the Fontanka news agency reported.

Following the explosion, officers in chemical hazard suits were seen on the upper floors of the building.

Eyewitnesses earlier claimed that a law enforcement officer was carried out of the building on a stretcher shortly afterwards, and was then taken away in an ambulance. Russia's Federal Security Service later denied the reports.

St. Petersburg authorities announced earlier that the raid was ordered by security services in the Russian Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria in the North Caucasus.

An investigation into the murder of the criminal gang leader Khizir Likhov uncovered information earlier this month that his accomplices were living at the address in St. Petersburg, Fontanka reported.

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