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11 Terror Suspects in Custody, One Year After St. Petersburg Metro Bombing

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Pavel Karavashkin / Interpress / TASS

Investigators have identified the organizers of the St. Petersburg metro bombing a year after the tragedy, saying their investigation into the terrorist attack is drawing to a close.

April 3 marks the one-year anniversary of the terror bombing that killed 15 people in a subway car traveling between two St. Petersburg metro stations. Investigators suspect 22-year-old Akbarzhon Dzhalilov, a Kyrgyz-born Russian citizen, of being the man who detonated the homemade explosive.

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Russia's Investigative Committee said Tuesday it has "identified the entire chain of persons involved in the perpetration of this crime, including its instigator, organizer and executors" jointly with the FSB.

“The terror attack was carried out by members of a radical Islamic terrorist group,” investigators said in an online statement Tuesday, adding that 11 suspects were being held in connection with the bombing.

The investigation said that the plotters were not personally acquainted with one another and had used online forms of communication to organize the attack.

“A thorough analysis of so called ‘electronic trails,’ which are left after these forms of communication, allowed [investigators] to expose and identify all of the members of the criminal group in the shortest time,” the statement said.

An ongoing legal dispute between the FSB and the encrypted messaging service Telegram over access to the St. Petersburg bombing suspects’ online conversations has threatened the app’s presence in Russia.

Related article: Telegram Fined For Refusing to Give FSB Access to Terrorists' Conversations

On Monday, after being informed that it faces a Wednesday, April 4 deadline to hand over encryption keys at the risk of being blocked, Telegram said it “absolutely under no circumstances has access to” the decoding tools.

In March, FSB officers in the westernmost Russian exclave of Kaliningrad said they had detained members of the Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad terrorist group, whose leader is suspected of ordering the St. Petersburg metro attack, the RBC business portal reported.

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