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IS Cell Shut Down in Russia's Tatarstan, Security Forces Say

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Public Relations Centre of the Russian Federal Security Service / TASS

Russian security forces have shut down an Islamic State cell in the Muslim-majority republic of Tatarstan, the Federal Security Service (FSB) has said.

Islamic State (IS) has previously claimed responsibility for several terrorist attacks in Russia, including in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizhny Novgorod and the North Caucasus republics of Dagestan and Chechnya. Earlier this month in Tatarstan, security services said they had detained the leader of the Russian wing of the Hizb ut-Tahrir Islamist group, a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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According to the FSB on Tuesday, six members of the IS cell as well as "11 citizens who fell under their influence" were detained in an operation coordinated with the Interior Ministry and the National Guard — also known as Rosgvardiya.

The FSB reportedly raided 18 addresses in Tatarstan, seizing firearms, ammunition and banned extremist literature.

"Members of the group intended to carry out a series of attacks on the territory of the Russian Federation and join militants in Syria. For these goals, they recruited supporters among radicalized youth," the FSB said in a statement posted online.

The leader of the cell was a Tatarstan native, previously "convicted for promoting IS," according to the FSB.

IS is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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