

'They Warned They'll Rape Me': Russian Soldier Stands by Mass Shooting

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Ramil Shamsutdinov 72.ru

A Russian conscript who gunned down eight fellow soldiers in the country's Far East last month acted in retaliation to hazing and a rape threat, according to his reported testimony and his father's remarks published Wednesday.

Private Ramil Shamsutdinov, 20, was detained Oct. 25 at the military base where he served and charged with murder. The Defense Ministry was quick to blame the shooting on a nervous breakdown, while later reporting hinted at hazing within unit 54160 in the closed town of Gorny, Zabaikalsky region.

Related article: [Why Did a Russian Soldier Shoot and Kill 8 Fellow Recruits?](#)

"That day, [the officers] promised to turn me out. They warned me that, like, they'll rape me," the Baza news website [quoted](#) Shamsutdinov as saying.

“I know they'd turned all the other young ones out before me. If that evening was my turn, I had nowhere to go, what should I have done?” Shamsutdinov reportedly said.

His father, Salimzhan Shamsutdinov, [said](#) earlier in the day that “constant, prolonged” hazing drove his son to carry out the mass shooting.

In comments to Russian media, he [recounted](#) his son telling him: “I’m sorry father, I couldn’t have done otherwise. Either they’d kill me or I’d kill them.” Shamsutdinov does not regret his “deliberate” actions, the father said.

Meanwhile, the head of a group called Officers of Russia [denied](#) the existence of hazing in the national armed forces and instead blamed violent video games for Shamsutdinov’s actions.

Baza, which did not say how it obtained excerpts of Shamsutdinov’s account, is known to have close ties to Russia’s security services. According to what it says was his testimony, Shamsutdinov said his hazing began with his superiors stealing his cellphone four months before the shooting and continued with physical abuse.

“Who do I complain to if the officers themselves beat me? I thought about running away but everything was closed. What was I to do?” Shamsutdinov said.

“The only thing I’m sorry for is that I accidentally hit two guys who had nothing to do with it. I have no pity for the others,” Baza quoted him as saying.

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