Russia Says Foiled Attack on Crimea's Energy System

April 19, 2023

The Federal Security Service of Russia

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said it had prevented an attack on energy systems in annexed Crimea, state media reported Wednesday.

An unidentified Russian-Ukrainian national was detained in the Crimean city of Kerch on suspicion of preparing to commit an act of sabotage and illegally buying and storing explosives, according to the TASS news agency.

"An improvised explosive device and means of communication containing correspondence with a representative of the Ukrainian special services — which coordinated his criminal activities — were seized at his home," the FSB said.

While the Russian security services regularly announce the detention of people accused of planning sabotage or attacks on Russian territory — accusing them of links to Ukraine or far-right figures — their claims are impossible to verify and there is often little subsequent information about associated criminal cases.

The Crimean peninsula, which was annexed by Russia in 2014, has seen regular attacks since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year.

Video released by the FSB on Wednesday showed agents entering an apartment block, detaining the suspect and photographing items identified as explosives inside a backpack.

A recording from what the FSB said was the suspect's smartphone showed a video tour of an industrial site narrated in the Ukrainian language. According to TASS, the voice belongs to the detained suspect.

No other details identifying the suspect, apart from the year of his birth, have been released.

If convicted, the man faces up to 20 years in prison.

Last week, FSB chief Alexander Bortnikov reported that his agency had foiled 118 terrorist crimes since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.