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# Dozens Arrested After Anti-Israeli Mob Storms Airport in Russia's Dagestan

October 30, 2023




A mob of anti-Israeli demonstrators gather outside Makhachkala International Airport. **Ramazan Rashidov / TASS**

*Updated with Peskov's remarks.*

At least 60 people were arrested after an anti-Israeli mob stormed an airport in Russia's North Caucasus republic of Dagestan on Sunday night, Russia's Interior Ministry has said.

"More than 150 active participants of the riots have been identified, 60 of them have been detained and taken in for further investigation," law enforcement authorities said in a statement released early Monday.

The night before, hundreds of people gathered outside the Makhachkala International Airport in the majority-Muslim republic of Dagestan, throwing objects at police officers and running onto the tarmac in search of Israelis and Jews rumored to be on an arriving flight from Tel Aviv.

Nine police officers were injured during the clashes, two of whom have been hospitalized, according to the Interior Ministry.

Dagestan's Health Ministry said more than 20 people were injured, including civilians, two of whom were in critical condition.

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Around 1,200 people were estimated to have taken part in Sunday night's storming of the airport, Russia's RBC news website reported, citing two anonymous Interior Ministry sources in Dagestan.

According to the two sources, police and other law enforcement agents managed to clear the airport of rioters by 1:45 a.m. Moscow time on Monday, around seven hours after the unrest broke out.

Russia's civil aviation agency said Makhachkala International Airport was reopened at 2:00 p.m. local time on Monday, with flights between Tel Aviv and Makhachkala and Mineralniye Vody to be redirected to other Russian cities. It had initially planned to close down the airport until Nov. 6.

Dagestan's Governor Sergei Melikov on Monday blamed "external enemies of our country" for stoking the unrest, claiming that a Telegram channel run from inside Ukraine had spread rumors about "Israeli refugees" arriving in Dagestan.

"I'm ashamed today," he said in a briefing with reporters, telling those involved in the unrest on Sunday to "wash away their disgrace" by going to fight in Russia's war against Ukraine.

The Telegram channel, which Melikov identified by the name Utro Dagestan, denied his claims.

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Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said its chairman Alexander Bastrykin had ordered his local subordinates to closely monitor their probe into the "organization of mass unrest," a charge that carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that President Vladimir Putin would convene a meeting with top officials later in the day to discuss the events in Dagestan, which he described as having been sparked by "attempts from the outside to divide Russian society."

State-run media outlets have largely ignored Sunday night's storming of the airport, with the independent news outlet Agentstvo reporting that only one of Russia's three major broadcasters ran a small story on the event as of Monday morning.

Regions across the North Caucasus, but especially Dagestan, have witnessed a series of anti-Israeli demonstrations in the weeks since Israel launched a relentless bombardment of the

Gaza Strip in response to Hamas fighters' bloody attack inside Israel on Oct. 7.

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