The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# Russia Opens 'Terrorism' Probe Into Military Plane Crash

By AFP

January 25, 2024



In this grab taken from a handout footage released by the Russian Investigative Committee on Jan. 25, an investigator works at the Russian IL-76 military transport plane crash site in the Belgorod region. **AFP PHOTO / Russian Investigative Committee**

Russia on Thursday opened a "terrorism" investigation over a military plane crash near the border with Ukraine after it accused Kyiv of downing the aircraft, which it said had more than 60 captured Ukrainian soldiers onboard.

The Russian defense and foreign ministries have blamed Ukrainian forces for downing the IL-76 transport plane over the southern Belgorod region on Wednesday.

"A criminal case under a terrorist act is being investigated in the Belgorod region on the Il-76 plane," Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said in a statement.

**Related article**: Ukraine Opens Criminal Probe Into Downing of Russian Plane

Moscow said there were no survivors among the 65 Ukrainian POWs, three crew members and three military personnel onboard.

The Investigative Committee said "experienced detectives, criminalists and experts" were working at the scene, adding that "the plane was downed by a "missile from the territory of Ukraine."

"Fragmented remains of people were found, as well as the flight recorders of the aircraft, which were sent for decoding," it said.

**Related article**: What Do We Know About the Il-76 Crash in Belgorod?

The Committee also said it was working to identify "persons among the Ukrainian armed forces" that it said were behind the crash.

Moscow has not provided any public images or evidence that Ukrainian soldiers were onboard, or shown proof that Kyiv knew its men were on the plane.

It has also not revealed the identities of the people onboard.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/01/25/russia-opens-terrorism-probe-into-military-plane-crash-a83858