

2 Killed, Several Injured After Shooting Outside Wildberries Office in Moscow

September 18, 2024



Law enforcement officers are seen outside the Romanov Dvor business centre in central Moscow.
Mikhail Klimentyev / TASS

At least two people were killed and several others injured in a shooting incident at the headquarters of Russian online retailer Wildberries in Moscow on Wednesday, with the company reporting that an armed group of men led by Vladislav Bakalchuk, the ex-husband of Wildberries founder Tatiana Bakalchuk, attempted to forcibly enter the building.

Law enforcement authorities [said](#) they were investigating the incident, which [resulted](#) in two police officers being injured and nearly 30 individuals being arrested, according to Interfax news agency. The state-run TASS news agency, citing an unnamed source at Wildberries, [reported](#) that two security guards were killed.

An altercation reportedly [began](#) when a group of men led by Vladislav Bakalchuk attempted to enter the building. A video published by the pro-Kremlin Telegram news channel Mash showed a scuffle outside the office, followed by gunshots and shouting.

Vladislav Bakalchuk later [claimed](#) he and his “team” were attacked when they arrived at the Wildberries headquarters “for negotiations to stop the construction of a warehouse.”

“I’m fine, and we’re sorting it out. Stay tuned for details,” he wrote on Telegram.

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Tatiana Bakalchuk, Russia’s wealthiest woman, [disputed](#) the claim, saying “No such talks were ever arranged.” She said Wildberries contacted law enforcement officials after her ex-husband “attempted to seize” the company’s office in Moscow.

“We have nothing to hide, so I ask that the results of the investigation into the motives behind this outrageous action be made public,” Bakalchuk said. “This is now an attempted hostile takeover — though, thankfully, an unsuccessful one.”

The shooting incident follows ongoing [tensions](#) surrounding Wildberries after it announced a merger with Russ Group over the summer, forming a new digital trading platform named RWB. Under the merger, Russ Group’s Robert Mirzoyan is slated to become the chief managing director of RWB, with Tatiana Bakalchuk as director general.

Business news media [called](#) the deal “very strange” for presenting itself as a merger between equal partners. Wildberries is 20 times bigger than Russ Group, with 538.7 billion rubles (\$2.7 billion) in revenues last year compared to Russ Group’s 27.9 billion rubles (\$300 million).

The independent business outlet The Bell suggested the RWB merger may be part of Russia’s wartime redistribution of assets that has rewarded Kremlin-linked business figures.

The personal fallout between Tatiana and Vladislav Bakalchuk [escalated](#) after their divorce in July. Vladislav had publicly sought the help of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, claiming he was facing a hostile takeover of the company.

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“This is a blatant and brazen takeover,” Kadyrov said in July. His opposition to the merger was unexpected given President Vladimir Putin’s [support](#) for the deal between Russ Group and Wildberries.

According to the independent investigative news outlet Agentstvo, three MMA fighters connected to a fighting club founded by Kadyrov were among the group of men [seen](#) in videos of Monday’s shooting in Moscow.

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