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Russian Investigators Conclude Crocus Terror Probe, Claim Attack Was Carried Out ‘in Ukraine’s Interests’

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Russian law enforcement authorities on Monday announced the completion of their investigation into last year’s deadly concert hall attack near Moscow, claiming it was carried out “in the interests” of Ukraine.

The Islamic State took responsibility for the March 22, 2024, mass shooting, in which four gunmen killed 149 people and wounded 609 others at Crocus City Hall. The attack caused an estimated 6 billion rubles ($76.4 million) in damages.

Russia’s Investigative Committee, which probes crimes, identified 19 alleged perpetrators, accomplices and arms suppliers as members of ISIS-K, the Islamic State affiliate active in Central and South Asia.

“This inhuman crime was planned and committed in the interests of the current leadership of

Ukraine in order to destabilize the political situation in our country," investigators said in a statement.

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The Investigative Committee repeated earlier claims by President Vladimir Putin that the attackers attempted to flee to Ukraine after the shooting but were captured in Russia's Bryansk region near the borders with Ukraine and Belarus. Kyiv has repeatedly denied any role in the attack.

Russian investigators said preparations for the assault began months in advance. Some suspects allegedly received training abroad, and weapons were reportedly modified and smuggled into Russia through the Dagestani port city of Kaspiysk.

A separate investigation is ongoing into six other suspects — including two alleged masterminds — who remain at large and are wanted internationally. Authorities said in March that those suspects recruited the gunmen and organized their training outside Russia.

In an earlier statement, the Investigative Committee accused the security services of an unnamed "unfriendly state" of planning and directing the attack in order to destabilize Russia.

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