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At Least 5 Killed After Gunman Opens Fire in Ukrainian Capital

By Barbara Wojazer for AFP

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A special team policeman stands in front of a hole made from a bullet in the window of a supermarket after a shooting in Kyiv on Saturday. **Sergei Supinsky / AFP**

Five people were killed in Kyiv on Saturday after a gunman opened fire and took hostages at a supermarket in the Ukrainian capital before being killed during an arrest attempt, officials said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that at least 10 people were hospitalized with wounds and trauma after the shooting, which took place in a residential district in the city's south.

Footage posted by the UNIAN news agency, which AFP was unable to immediately verify, showed a man carrying a gun and shooting at a person from close range near a block of flats.

The suspect then entered a grocery store where gunshots were heard, Kyiv Mayor Vitali

Klitschko said. Four hostages from the supermarket "have been rescued," Zelensky said later on social media.

"The attacker in Kyiv who opened fire on civilians has been eliminated," Zelensky said, offering condolences to the families of the victims.

An AFP reporter saw the supermarket — which had blood stains on its shop window — cordoned off by a heavy security presence, with officers wearing bulletproof vests and crime investigators arriving at the scene.

The assailant's motive was not immediately known.

40-minute standoff

Ukrainian Prosecutor General Ruslan Kravchenko said the suspect was a 58-year-old man born in Moscow and that according to initial reports, "he used an automatic weapon."

An employee of the grocery store Tetyana, told AFP that she had heard sounds "in the store, like champagne being popped or balloons bursting several times. Then the customers started shouting, 'Run!'"

"There's a spot where you can hide behind the refrigerators, and we ran there. I heard a man moaning," she recounted, her voice trembling.

Zelensky urged "a swift investigation" into the shooting and said that all the circumstances of the incident were being established.

Ukrainian Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said the standoff between the assailant and police negotiators at the supermarket lasted around 40 minutes.

"We tried to persuade him. Realizing that there was likely an injured person inside, we offered to bring in tourniquets to stop the bleeding... But he didn't respond," Klymenko told reporters at the scene.

"That's why the order was given to eliminate him," he added, saying that the gunman had killed one of the people taken hostage.

Ukraine, which has been fighting a more than four-year-long war with Russia, has seen sporadic shooting incidents but has a relatively low crime rate.

Last year, a man shot dead two people in a Kyiv suburb in a dispute over the sale of a firearm.

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