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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Female Bomber Kills At Least 3, Injures 21 Near Moscow Restaurant

By Reuters

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A homemade bomb carried by a woman killed at least three people and injured 21 near an upscale restaurant in central Moscow on Saturday evening, authorities said, amid unconfirmed speculation on social media that the attack may have been linked to the war in Ukraine.

The explosion occurred just before 8:00 p.m. close to an Italian restaurant located in one of Moscow's seven Stalin-era skyscrapers at Kudrinskaya Ploshchad, the police said.

Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NAK) said an unidentified woman carrying an improvised explosive device had tried to get into the restaurant but had been stopped by a security guard.

NAK said the woman, the guard and a customer at the Balzi Rossi Italian restaurant had been killed instantly in the blast that followed.

REN TV cited a source on Sunday as saying that two people who had been taken to the hospital had later died of their wounds, bringing the death toll to five, though there was no official confirmation. REN TV said six people remained in a serious condition.

Speculation of link to Ukraine war

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin on Sunday offered his condolences to the families of those killed and said those responsible would be punished. "A brutal terrorist attack was carried out in Moscow yesterday," he said in a statement.

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Heavily armed law enforcement officers sealed off the scene of the attack on Saturday.

The authorities did not name those killed or injured or any suspects. Unverified social media reports suggested that a top Russian military commander had been the intended target but had been unharmed.

More than four years into a full-scale war with Ukraine, Russia this year promised better protection for high-ranking military officials after a series of assassinations and attempted killings, which it blamed on Kyiv.

Russian war bloggers, without citing any evidence, were quick to blame Ukraine for the attack. Kyiv did not immediately comment.

The Kommersant daily suggested that the woman carrying the bomb may not have known about it, and that it had been set off remotely by someone else.

The restaurant's website said the venue had been closed on Saturday for a private event.

The nature of the attack recalled a bombing carried out in 2023 that killed Russian pro-war blogger Vladlen Tatarsky.

A young woman, Darya Trepova, was jailed for 27 years for delivering a bomb concealed inside a statuette that exploded in Tatarsky's hands. She said she had been acting under instruction from a man in Ukraine who had sent her money.

Senior Ukrainian officials at the time neither claimed responsibility nor denied involvement.

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