

Beat: Miscellaneous

Militants kill 3 police officers, 2 teens in southwest Russia

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USPA News - Two teenagers were killed Wednesday when a bomb exploded near a store in the North Caucasus republic of Dagestan, local authorities said. It came just hours after three police officers in the same region were killed when their vehicle was fired upon.

The bombing occurred at around 12:20 p.m. local time on Wednesday when two teenagers found a cardboard box near a housewares store in Makhachkala, the capital of Russia's Dagestan republic. The teenagers had tried to open the box, causing the bomb inside of it to explode. "The explosion killed two teenagers. Another two persons were hospitalized with injuries of varying degrees," a spokesperson for the republic's interior ministry said, adding that the device was equivalent to about 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of TNT. The teenagers who died were 15 and 17 years, but the ages of the other two victims were not immediately known. The attack in Makhachkala came just hours after militants attacked a police vehicle in the city of Buynaksk, around 45 kilometers (28 miles) southwest of Makhachkala. The attack, which happened at around 9:50 p.m. local time on Tuesday, resulted in the shooting deaths of three police officers. "Two other police officers were taken to a hospital in Buynaksk with gunshot wounds," the interior ministry spokesperson said, identifying the victims as one police major and two lieutenants. Investigators examining the scene recovered bullets belonging to semi-automatic pistols that were apparently used in the attack. Militants in the region regularly carry out attacks against security forces, police, and civilians, more than a decade after a separatist war ended in Chechnya. The volatile region of Dagestan neighbors Chechnya where about 50 percent of all militant attacks in Russia take place.

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