# Coordinated Attacks in Dagestan Target Religious and Police Establishments



On June 23, 2024, Dagestan, a republic in southern Russia, experienced a series of coordinated attacks targeting religious and police establishments. Gunmen attacked two Orthodox churches, a synagogue, and a traffic police post in the cities of Derbent and Makhachkala. The assailants killed at least six police officers and a priest named Nikolai Kotelnikov, aged 66, who also had his throat slit in Derbent. Reports indicate more than a dozen police officers were injured.

The synagogue in Derbent and the Holy Dormition Cathedral in the capital, Makhachkala, were set ablaze. Witnesses described scenes of chaos as gunmen clashed with police forces, and roads out of Makhachkala were closed. The attacks prompted Russia’s Investigative Committee to classify the incidents as "acts of terror."

In Derbent, the attackers also struck a police checkpoint, igniting a police vehicle. Local officials and media reported that at least four militants were killed following clashes with security forces. The investigation is ongoing, with some officials attributing the attacks to international terrorist organizations.

This violence follows a history of instability in Dagestan, a region that has experienced frequent ethnic and religious tensions, exacerbated since the onset of the Israel-Hamas conflict. Officials like Sergei Melikov, the head of Dagestan, suggested that the attacks aimed to destabilize the region. The situation remains tense as authorities continue to search for remaining suspects.