# Attack in Dagestan by Islamic Militants Claims 21 Lives



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The death toll in an attack by Islamic militants in Russia's southern region of Dagestan has risen to 21 after a wounded police officer passed away in the hospital on June 25, 2024, officials reported. The attack, which occurred on Sunday, targeted Christian and Jewish houses of worship and involved gunfire against police in the cities of Derbent and Makhachkala.

This incident marks the deadliest attack in Russia since March of the same year, which saw gunmen killing 145 people at a concert in suburban Moscow. An affiliate of the Islamic State group in Afghanistan praised the Dagestan assault, referring to it as an operation by “brothers in the Caucasus.”

The Investigative Committee, Russia’s top criminal investigation agency, confirmed that all five attackers were killed. Mavsum Ragimov, head of the Derbent region, announced that the death of a police sergeant brought the total casualties to 21, including 16 police officers. Medical authorities indicated that at least 46 people were injured, 13 of whom were police.

Among the deceased was Rev. Nikolai Kotelnikov, a 66-year-old Russian Orthodox priest. The attack coincided with the Orthodox celebration of Pentecost. In the past, Dagestan has experienced frequent militant extremist attacks, although such violence had decreased in recent years.

Despite the reduced frequency of attacks, extremist tensions remain in the region. In October, hundreds of men rioted at a Dagestan airport, targeting a flight from Israel and injuring over 20 people.