

13 dead as van rams crowd in Barcelona 'terror attack'

Barcelona

At least 13 people were killed yesterday when a driver deliberately slammed a van into crowds on Barcelona's most popular street in what police said was a "terror attack".

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack which caused panic on the streets of Spain's largest city and drew condemnation from world leaders.

"We can confirm there are

13 dead and more than 50 injured," regional interior minister Joaquim Forn said in a tweet.

Catalan police said they had arrested one suspect, and denied earlier reports that the perpetrator was holed up in a bar near the scene.

The famous Las Ramblas is one of Barcelona's busiest streets, lined with shops and restaurants and normally thronged with tourists and street performers until well

into the night.

Police said there had been a "huge collision" between a van and pedestrians on the thoroughfare and a police source said officers were seeking a total of two suspects.

Spain's royal family condemned the assault in unusually strong terms, vowing that their country would not be "terrorised" by extremists.

'Bodies on the floor'

Witnesses spoke of a scene of carnage, with bodies strewn along the boulevard as others fleeing for their lives.

"When it happened I ran out and saw the damage," local shop worker Xavi Perez said.

"There were bodies on the floor with people crowding round them. People were crying. There were lots of foreigners."

Witness Aamer Anwar told Britain's Sky News television that he was walking down Las Ramblas, which he described as "jam-packed" with tourists.

"All of a sudden, I just sort of heard a crashing noise and the whole street just started to run, screaming. I saw a woman right next to me screaming for her kids."

Spain had so far been spared the kind of extremist violence that rocked nearby France,

Terror attack hits Barcelona's Las Ramblas

A van has ploughed into crowds in Barcelona's Las Ramblas tourist area, killing at least one person and injuring several others



Source: BBC

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Bahrain condemns attack

Manama

Bahrain condemned the terrorist attack in Barcelona and expressed solidarity with the Kingdom of Spain in confronting terrorism and preserving the security of its citizens and the residents living on its territories.

The Foreign Ministry, in a statement yesterday, extended

heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and wished speedy recovery for the injured who were wounded in the attack.

It reiterated Bahrain's firm rejection of violence, terrorism and extremism and called for concerted international efforts to root out the heinous scourge that threatens global security.



Injured people are attended after the van ploughed into the crowd

Belgium and Germany.

But it was hit by what is still Europe's deadliest jihadist attack in March 2004, when bombs exploded on commuter trains in Madrid, killing 191 people in an attack claimed by

Al Qaeda-inspired extremists.

Ethan Spibey, a charity director on holiday in the city, said he and several others had locked themselves in a nearby church after yesterday's van ramming.

"All of a sudden it was real kind of chaos... people just started running screaming," he told Sky. "There was kind of a mini stampede."

Local Tom Gueller, who lives on a road next to Las Ramblas he saw the van speeding along the boulevard.

"It wasn't slowing down at all. It was just going straight through the middle of the crowds in the middle of the Ramblas," he told BBC Radio.

A Greek diplomat in the city said three nationals had been wounded -- a woman and two children -- without providing details.

Yesterday's attack, which followed similar incidents in Britain, Germany and France, drew widespread condemnation. (AFP)



US President Donald Trump

"The United States condemns the terror attack in Barcelona, Spain, and will do whatever is necessary to help. Be tough & strong, we love you!"



British Prime Minister Theresa May

"My thoughts are with the victims of today's terrible attack in Barcelona and the emergency services responding to this ongoing incident. The UK stands with Spain against terror."



French President Emmanuel Macron

"All my thoughts and solidarity of France for the victims of the tragic attack in Barcelona. We remain united and determined."



Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy

"Terrorists will never defeat a united people who loves freedom against barbarism. All Spain is with victims and families"



Russian President Vladimir Putin

"What happened once again confirms the need for a genuine unification of efforts by the entire world community in an uncompromising battle with the forces of terror"



A white van suspected of ploughing into pedestrians in Barcelona (source: The Sun)