

fire over assault

Seven hurt in knife attack in Russia

Moscow

A man stabbed seven people on the street in Russia's far north Saturday before being shot dead by police but investigators said that his motive was most likely not terrorism.

The incident took place yesterday morning in the city of Surgut, where the man "carried out attacks on passers-by, causing stab wounds", said Russia's Investigative Committee which probes major crimes.

It said armed police called to the scene had "liquidated" the attacker.

Regional officials said seven people were taken to hospital and on Saturday afternoon, four remained in a serious condition while one was stable and two were discharged.

The regional interior ministry told Interfax news agency that the theory that the incident was "a terrorist (attack) is not the main one."

The Investigative Committee said it had

established the man's identity, saying he was a local resident born in 1994, and that they were looking into "his possible psychiatric disorders."

Investigators opened a criminal probe into attempted murder and Committee chief Alexander Bastrykin has taken the incident under his personal control.

Russian television said the victims were aged between 27 and 77 and include two women.

Busy area

Regional police said officers fired warning shots at the scene before firing at the suspect who was wearing a balaclava.

YouTube footage shown on Russia's Ren TV television showed a black-clad man lying on a pedestrian walkway with a policeman kneeling on his back as sirens wailed.

Channel 5 showed video footage of a sniffer dog being deployed to check the body and a photograph of a young man

bleeding heavily slumped over a bench.

State news agency TASS said the city's largest shopping centre was evacuated after the stabbings, citing its director, and police posted a video of the attack site, showing it to be an area busy with traffic and blocks of flats.

The city lies some 2,100 kilometres (1,330 miles) northeast of Moscow in the oil-rich Khanty-Mansi region.

The region's governor was flying out to the city to hold a meeting with investigators, authorities said.

And the regional government moved to curb panic in the city, insisting the situation was "under control" and calling for calm.

It also urged both residents and the media to "use reliable information in assessing the situation until all the circumstances are established."

Writing on Twitter, opposition leader Alexei Navalny questioned the authorities' treatment of the incident.

"Someone runs round with a knife and tries to kill as many people as possible. What is that, if not a terrorist attack?"

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A young Muslim girl holds a message reading "First of all we are human. Islam is peace"



People pay tribute to the victims of the Barcelona attack on Las Ramblas boulevard in Barcelona