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**Kazakhstan issues nationwide 'yellow' terrorism alert after Islamist attack on military base**

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The city of Aktobe, where the militants robbed two gun shops and used the stolen weapons to assault a nearby base of the National Guard on Sunday, remains on the lockdown as security forces continue a counter-terrorism operation.

The nationwide alert is to remain in place for at least 40 days, the Kazakh national counter-terrorism staff said on Monday. The body asked the people to be especially cautious, and to take note of suspicious items like unattended bags or people acting in a strange manner and report them to the police. The police ramped up patrols throughout the country.

Read more [Police arrest, kill radical Islamist gang, after attack on military base in Kazakhstan](#)

Overnight the police killed five gunmen in a continued manhunt, they reported on Monday. Nine of the attackers are in police custody, but several are yet to be caught.

*"We have now 12 [perpetrators] killed and six injured. We believe that six or seven remain at large. They have five firearms at their disposal,"* Interior Minister Kalmukanbet Kasymov said.

The minister added that the assailants used weapons stolen from the shops as a stepping stone to acquiring even more heavy arms at the military base.

*"The criminals wanted to get into the arsenal and get arms there. The guards resisted them, then our police forces arrived and the criminals retreated,"* he described the attack.

Six people, including civilians, were killed in the wave of violence in Aktobe and 38 others were injured. The majority of them were soldiers at the base, many of whom were unarmed at the moment it was attacked.

Kazakh authorities said that the attackers were radical Islamists and that they treat the events as an act of terrorism.

Russia, Kazakhstan's close partner and fellow member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) - a security organization which also includes Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - said it trusted the Kazakh security services to deal with the crisis.

*"The situation is pretty much under control of the law enforcement. There is no reason to ramp up [border security],"* Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists, adding that Kazakh investigators will doubtfully get to the bottom of the affair.

The attack in Kazakhstan may be a sign of a looming wave of violence in Central Asia, Ricardo Baretzky, president of the European Center for Information Policy and Security, told RT.

*"We have to look at this and say, 'Could this be the big spark?' This is one of the regions that certainly could potentially have a big spark, where everything can go horribly wrong in the future,"* he said.

The radicals are trying to raise tension in Kazakhstan and destabilize the situation, Andrey Chebotaryov, director of the Kazakhstan-based Alternative Center for Current Studies, told RT.

*"There were protests in western Kazakhstan recently over a land reform. The extremists apparently decided to seize the moment and raise the tension further, to destabilize the situation and use it against the authorities,"* he said.

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