Beat: Local

Female suicide bomber kills 6 on bus in southwest Russia

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USPA News - Six people were killed Monday when a woman with explosives strapped to her body entered a bus in southwestern Russia and blew herself up, local authorities said, adding to security fears ahead of the upcoming Winter Olympics in the country. The attack happened at around 2 p.m. local time on a bus driving on a main road in Volgograd, a city about 920 kilometers (571 miles) southeast of Moscow.

Video from a dashboard camera on a nearby vehicle showed the bus traveling at high speed until an explosion ripped through the vehicle, after which it slowly comes to a halt. Emergency services in the region said a total of seven people, including the suicide bomber, were killed while 33 others were injured. "Twenty-eight of them were hospitalized, including eight people who are in intensive care," one official said. "Many of the injured are in a critical condition." Vladimir Markin, a spokesman for Russia`s Investigative Committee, identified the suspected suicide bomber as a 30-year-old woman from the North Caucasus republic of Dagestan. Militants in Dagestan regularly carry out attacks against security forces, police, and civilians, more than a decade after a separatist war ended in Chechnya. "According to information obtained by investigators, the woman in hijab got on board of the bus at one of the stops, after which the explosion took place almost immediately," Markin said. "At the moment, investigators are continuing to examine the scene of the incident. Witnesses and survivors have been questioned, and video from surveillance cameras has been seized and studied." Islamist militants in the region have been fighting Russian security forces for years, looking to establish an independent state in the North Caucasus, but attacks in other parts of the country are rare. Around 50 percent of all terrorist-related violence in Russia in 2010 happened in the mainly-Muslim region. Chechen Islamist rebel leader Dokka Umarov claimed responsibility for ordering the suicide bombing that killed 37 people and injured approximately 200 more at Moscow`s Domodedovo airport in January 2011. It followed a twin suicide bombing on the Moscow subway in March 2010, killing 40 people and injuring 120 others.

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