2 dead, 5 wounded in suspected terrorist knife attack in France

April 4, 2020

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ABC News

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/dead-wounded-suspected-terrorist-knife-attack-france/story?id=69975220>

A knife attack which resulted in two dead and five wounded Saturday morning in the town of Romans-sur-Isere, an hour drive South of Lyon, is being treated as a terrorist attack by French authorities. Two of the victims are in critical condition.

The 33-year-old assailant stabbed seven people in shops and streets in downtown Romans-sur-Isere shortly before being arrested, police told ABC News.

The assailant, of Sudanese nationality, was arrested "while he was kneeling on a sidewalk praying in the Arabic language."

On site, Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner spoke of a "terrorist journey" before telling the press that the national anti-terrorist prosecutor's office was currently assessing the situation and would decide whether or not to qualify the act as a terrorist act.

The judiciary police of Lyon originally opened an investigation which was later in the evening taken over by the Counterterrorism Prosecutor's Office.

In a press release, the Counterterrorism Prosecutor's office revealed that "handwritten documents with religious overtones in which the author of the lines complained in particular of living in a country of disbelievers" were found duringa search carried out at the suspect's home.

The alleged perpetrator was taken into custody on charges of assassination and attempted assassination in connection with a terrorist enterprise and criminal terrorist association. An acquaintance of the suspect's was also placed in police custody.

The Interior Minister saluted the mobilization of a hundred police officers during an ongoing nationwide lockdown to stem the spread of COVID-19 which already claimed the lives of more than 6,000 in France.

"The security forces intervened and were able to quickly neutralize him," Castaner stated. "As I speak to you, it seems like all the risks have been neutralized."

France’s President Emmanuel Macron expressed his support for the victims in a tweet, saying "My thoughts are with the victims of the Romans-sur-Isère attack," and calling the attack an "odious act which comes to plunge into mourning our country already hard hit in recent weeks."