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## **MAGDEBURG ATTACK FUELS DISINFORMATION AND MISTRUST IN GERMAN LEADERS**

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BY NETTE NÖSTLINGER

German leaders are coming under intense scrutiny for failing to prevent an attack on a Christmas market in Magdeburg last week after receiving several warnings about the suspect — an anti-Islam activist who made little secret of his violent intentions in online posts.

Investigations into the security failures are likely to haunt Germany's governing parties for weeks ahead of a snap election set for Feb. 23 and could well fuel a general sense of mistrust and insecurity among voters, particularly as far-right groups rush to capitalize on the attack by depicting mainstream leaders as unable to protect Germans.

In a bid to restore trust following the attack, German political leaders vowed to fully investigate the security lapses and enact new laws to strengthen police and bolster security after the tragedy that left five people dead.

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