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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Zakayev Denies Attack

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Akhmed Zakayev, a London-based representative for Chechen insurgents, has denied accusations that he was behind an attack on Chechnya's parliament that killed six people, Ekho Moskvy radio reported Wednesday.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov blamed Zakayev, who is wanted by Russia on separate terrorism charges, for Tuesday's attack. But Zakayev said he had nothing to do with it.

Earlier news reports said the assault was likely carried out by the Chechen warlord Khusein Gakayev, whom Zakayev pledged allegiance to last week.

Meanwhile, a police officer and three militants were killed Wednesday in a shootout in Kabardino-Balkaria's capital, Nalchik, and two militants were surrounded and shot dead by Chechen police in Dagestan, Interfax said. ⊠

(MT)

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