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Militant Leader, 3 Accomplices Shot Dead in Nalchik Gunfight

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Four militants were killed Tuesday when security forces stormed an apartment that had been turned into a bomb laboratory in Kabardino-Balkaria's capital, Nalchik, news reports said.

Security forces boxed the militants into the apartment and shot them dead after they refused to surrender and opened fire, Interfax reported.

No casualties were reported for police or civilians.

The dead were identified as Astemir Mamishev, Ruslan Fedyanovich, Nadezhda Petruchenya and Anatoly Ozrokov, all wanted militants.

Mamishev was believed to be one of the main leaders of the Islamist insurgency in Kabardino-Balkaria and was accused of killing the republic's head mufti in December and several officials and businessmen.

Fedyanovich was also considered a prominent militant wanted in connection with several

felonies.

Firearms and explosives were found in the apartment, along with a map of Nalchik with transportation infrastructure highlighted, implying potential targets for future terrorist attacks, Interfax said.

In Dagestan, a suicide bomber detonated explosives strapped to his body when police tried to stop him at a Makhachkala intersection to check his documents, the region's Interior Minister Abdurashit Magomedov said, Interfax reported.

The blast killed a police officer and wounded another, he said. The bomber, who was also killed, has been identified, Magomedov said, without announcing his name.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev said Tuesday that eight militants plotting to stage attacks during Victory Day celebrations were killed Sunday. He did not elaborate but said 146 militants have been killed in the North Caucasus since the start of the year, his ministry reported on its web site.

(MT, Reuters)

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