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Anti-Islamist Campaigner Shot Dead

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The official in charge of anti-Islamist propaganda for Dagestan was shot dead Thursday in Makhachkala as he exited his Toyota Camry, Interfax reported.

Two masked men with automatic rifles shot Garun Kurbanov, killed his driver, and fled the scene in a Zhiguli car, an Investigative Committee spokesman said.

The attack was captured by surveillance cameras, but the footage was of little use because of the masks, the report said.

Kurbanov, 49, headed the information department at the office of President Magomedsalam Magomedov and acted as his spokesman. He was an atheist and a staunch opponent of the Islamist insurgency, Gazeta.ru reported.

Kurbanov was likely killed by Islamists, his deputy, Zubairu Zubairuyev, said by telephone. He described his former boss as a "very responsible and reliable person." "He had neither the time nor the desire for anything but his job. He even stayed at the office all night sometimes," Zubairuyev said.

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