

Inquiry Opened Into Estonian Attack

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Karen Drambyan's body being carried out of Estonia's Defense Ministry. **Ints Kalnins**

TALLINN, Estonia — The gunman armed with explosives who opened fire in Estonia's Defense Ministry late last week was an Armenian-born lawyer who had recently lost his home in a court ruling, officials and news reports said.

Defense Minister Mart Laar said authorities should investigate whether the assailant, Karen Drambyan, had been partially motivated by the terrorist who carried out last month's massacre in Norway that killed 77 people.

"That is something that needs to be carefully investigated," Laar told Estonian national broadcaster ERR. He was not in the building at the time of Thursday's mid-afternoon attack.

Drambyan detonated a smoke bomb and fired shots, but police stormed the building and killed him, officials said. No one else was hurt.

Drambyan, who had held Estonian citizenship since the early 1990s, was a member of the small, left-wing Estonian United Left Party that is not represented in the parliament, ministry spokesman Peeter Kuimet said.

Officials said they knew of no possible motive, pending an investigation by the security police and the prosecutor's office.

A report on the web site of Russian-language newspaper Dzen za Dnyom said Drambyan's apartment had been sold by court marshals on the eve of the attack.

Estonian Prime Minister Andrus Ansip described the incident as "extremely regrettable," saying Drambyan had a "substantial amount" of explosives and rounds of ammunition on him.

The attack shocked the tiny, tranquil Baltic nation of 1.3 million people where shootings are rare. The most recent unrest was in 2007 when Russian-speaking young people rioted and looted the city center for two days after authorities put a statue of a Red Army soldier, that had been in the center, in a cemetery.

(AP, Reuters)

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