

Radical Islamist Kills 7, Self In Deadly Kazakh Rampage

November 13, 2011

The  Moscow Times

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan — A radical Islamist killed seven people, including five law enforcement officers, in a rampage Saturday in Kazakhstan's southern city of Taraz, authorities said. The suspect blew himself up as officers moved in to arrest him.

The prosecutor general's office said in a statement that the killings began in the morning when the suspect opened fire and killed two security service officers who were tailing him.

Authorities said the attacker, identified only as Kariyev, later attacked a weapons store, killing the owner and a customer. He then commandeered a vehicle and shot dead two police officers.

Kariyev subsequently returned to his home, where he picked up a grenade launcher that he then used to fire on a local branch of the Committee for National Security, the successor agency to the KGB.

"As an attempt was made to disarm Kariyev, he blew himself up, which resulted in the death of police captain Baitasov, who led the platoon engaged in the capture," the statement said.

The shootout and bombing is the latest in a recent string of Islamist-related attacks in Kazakhstan and will deepen worries of a mounting terrorist threat in the nation.

Kazakhstan has been largely untroubled by Islamist-related violence, but the past few months have seen an anomalous spike in attacks that authorities have tied to radical organizations.

Most recently, the Jund al-Khilafah militant group claimed responsibility for two blasts in late October in the western oil town of Atyrau. Only one person — the man engaged in setting the bombs — was killed.

Jund al-Khilafah had previously warned that it intended to engage in a terror campaign in Kazakhstan if the authorities declined to overturn what it claims is a ban on wearing the Islamic veil. Kazakh authorities deny that there is such a ban.

Authorities did, however, respond to the wave of violence in the summer by swiftly passing a law that tightens registration rules for religious groups. Supporters of the bill said it would help combat religious extremism.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/11/13/radical-islamist-kills-7-self-in-deadly-kazakh-rampage-a-10736>