

Islamist Rebel Killed in Shootout

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The  Moscow Times

Security forces have killed a leader of an Islamist rebel group in the North Caucasus who was accused of plotting a botched suicide attack in Moscow and calling for more bombings.

Ibragimkhalil Daudov was found dead in a forest Tuesday after being wounded over the weekend in a shootout when police stormed where he was hiding in Dagestan, the Kommersant daily reported.

Daudov escaped after the shootout, in which four gunmen were killed, but lost a lot of blood and froze to death, Kommersant quoted security officers as saying.

The Anti-Terrorism Committee confirmed Daudov's death and said it had seized videos calling on fellow villagers to leave their families and undertake jihad, or Islamic holy war.

"Believing that it was for him to decide who should live and who deserves to die, Daudov ... promised to do away with anyone who would not acknowledge the criminals' right to foster tyranny and lawlessness," the committee said in a statement.

Daudov was a leader of the outlawed Caucasus Emirate, a rebel group that is fighting to carve

out an Islamist state across the North Caucasus.

Its leader, Chechen-born Doku Umarov, claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on Moscow's Domodedovo Airport that killed 37 people in January last year.

Russian investigators say Daudov brought his wife and another woman to Moscow in 2009 to carry out a suicide attack on Russians celebrating New Year's Eve near the Kremlin, but their bomb exploded hours earlier in a Moscow suburb. Daudov's wife was killed in the explosion and several people were arrested.

Alexander Bortnikov, head of the Federal Security Service, said separately Wednesday that 345 suspected rebels had been killed in the North Caucasus last year, including 48 leaders, the Interfax news agency reported.

He said 365 "terrorist crimes" had been reported in the North Caucasus in 2011 compared with 779 in 2010.

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