

# Ex-Mayor in Criminal Case Shot Dead in Moscow

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**The  Moscow Times**

The ex-mayor of a city in the Rostov region who was run out of office amid allegations of scandal, was shot dead in Moscow on Wednesday by an unknown gunman, officials said.

Sergei Ponomarenko, 47, who was the mayor of Shakhty until last year was shot in the head through the window of his Audi at a BP gas station on Mozhaiskoye Shosse in the western part of the city, Interfax reported, citing Moscow investigators.

Ponomarenko had been elected mayor of the city — the third largest in the Rostov region with a population of 240,000 — on three occasions, the last time being in 2007.

He resigned before the end of his term last February following allegations that he had misused the city's budget and his office's Mercedes bus. In June 2011, a criminal case was opened against him on abuse-of office charges.

Last month, another criminal case was opened against Ponomarenko over purported bankruptcy of a municipal enterprise during his term in office that resulted in damages of 45

million rubles (\$1.5 million).

He had been staying in Shakhty under written order not to leave town, but had absconded from the region's territory about two weeks ago, Novaya Gazeta reported.

The investigations of the two cases will be continued despite Ponomarenko's death, Interfax reported.

He had earlier been the target of an assassination plot when a bomb was planted outside his house in 2007, but he received a warning and the bomb was found before it was detonated.

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