

Series of Suicides Follow Assassination Attempt on Abkhaz Leader

April 18, 2012



A car from Abkhazian President Alexander Ankvab's motorcade burns after a February 22 assassination attempt.

A suspect in the Feb. 22 assassination attempt on Abkhazia's president, Alexander Ankvab, committed suicide in a pretrial detention center overnight Wednesday, a day after the former head of Abkhazia's Interior Ministry shot himself and another suspect tried to cut his own throat.

Timur Khutaba, one of four held in connection with the assassination attempt, used a noose fashioned out of his clothing to hang himself in his cell in the Sukhumi detention center, a spokesman for the breakaway republic's general prosecutor's office said, RIA-Novosti reported.

Another suspect, former Abkhazia Interior Ministry head Aslambei Kchach, locked himself in his house Tuesday and shot himself in a bedroom as officers approached the residence to arrest him.

A third suspect, Murtaz Sakaniya, also tried to commit suicide by cutting his throat just before law enforcement officers arrested him April 17, but he was taken to a hospital and survived.

Law enforcement authorities said six people were arrested April 12, though two were later released.

Ankvab was not harmed in the Feb. 22 attempt, but two of his bodyguards succumbed to injuries after assailants detonated a roadside bomb in the path of the president's motorcade and opened fire with grenade launchers, a machine gun and Kalashnikov rifles.

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