

'Black Widow' Bomber Was Actress, Dancer

By [Nikolaus von Twickel](#)

August 30, 2012



Aminat Kurbanova

The female suicide bomber that killed prominent Dagestani cleric Said Atsayev earlier this week had been a theater actress and member of a breakdance troupe before joining the republic's Islamist movement, national media reported Thursday.

Aminat Kurbanova, born with the ethnic Russian surname Saprykina, graduated from Dagestan State University's drama school in Makhachkala and went on to work in the city's Russian-language Gorky Theater, Kommersant reported, citing an unspecified law enforcement source.

Together with her first husband, fellow actor Marat Kurbanov, she also was a member of a local breakdance ensemble that called itself "Snatch," the report said.

A number of videos of Snatch performances are available on YouTube, but none show female

participants.

A video [published](#) by the Lifenews.ru tabloid website showed a woman resembling Kurbanova performing a classical dance with a man at an unidentified location.

Reports said Kurbanova converted to Islam after marriage and became a member of Dagestan's radical Islamist insurgency after her husband was killed in an anti-terrorism operation in 2009.

Kurbanova subsequently married twice, and her last husband, Magomed Ilyasov, died when handling a self-made bomb, the state-run RIADagestan.ru news site [reported](#).

Ilyasov is suspected of organizing a double suicide attack that killed two policemen and injured almost 30 in the Dagestani town of Gubden in February 2011. The two bombers were later identified as Vitaly Razdobudko and his wife Maria Khoroshyova, thought to be the first ethnic Slavs to carry out suicide attacks.

Investigators had put Kurbanova on a list of potentially dangerous persons last year, and she was erroneously thought to be a participant in a twin suicide car bomb that killed at least 13 people and wounded over 100 in Makhachkala this May, the Kommersant report said.

On Tuesday, Kurbanova detonated a bomb fixed to her body while posing as a pilgrim wishing to meet Atsayev in his native village of Chirkei. Atsayev was a leading representative of the region's traditional wing of Islam.

The growing number of converted Muslims identified as terrorists prompted calls for special surveillance Thursday. Izvestia quoted an unspecified law enforcement source as saying intelligence services could monitor all of the country's female converts.

Dagestan has for years been plagued by Islamist attacks on traditional and moderate Muslims, who are supported by regional authorities.

Georgia said earlier this week that government troops had killed 11 militant hostage-takers who had crossed the border from Dagestan's Tsuntinsky district.

A website linked to the Dagestani militants confirmed that 11 "mujahedin" had been "betrayed and killed" by Georgian forces. However, a [statement](#) on VDagestan.com denied that the Islamist fighters had taken hostages, calling this "slander and lies from the Georgian side."

A spokesman for the Federal Security Service, which oversees Russia's border guards, earlier denied that any illegal crossing into Georgia had occurred.

Related articles:

- [Ethnic Russian Woman Suspected as Suicide Bomber](#)
- [Suicide Bomber Kills Islamic Leader, 5 Others in Dagestan](#)
- [Police Find Exploded Car of Suspected Militants](#)

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/08/30/black-widow-bomber-was-actress-dancer-a17421>