

Muslim Cleric Shot Dead in Dagestan

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Russian Orthodox priest holding a cross during a ceremony commemorating the victims of political oppression Tuesday in Stavropol. More than 500 people gathered in central Moscow the same day to protest what presenters dubbed the continuation of political oppression in the country. **Eduard Korniyenko**

A Muslim cleric and two of his relatives were shot dead in Dagestan on Tuesday in the fifth murder of a religious leader in the turbulent North Caucasus republic this year.

Unidentified attackers fired at the three men while the trio was sitting in a Toyota Corolla parked on a street in the town of Derbent at around 6:25 a.m., the Investigative Committee said in a [statement](#). The assailants then fled by car, while the three victims died at the scene.

Investigators said one of the victims was 49-year-old mullah Karimulla Ibragimov, according to preliminary information. The other victims, an 82-year-old and a 50-year-old, were not identified by the committee, but the Regnum news agency [said](#) they were Ibragimov's father Ibragim and brother Safigula.

Ibragimov was an imam and had repeatedly received threats, an unidentified relative of the cleric told Regnum. The relative said he thinks the imam's murder could be linked to his religious activities.

Unlike several other, moderate clerics killed in Dagestan this year, Ibragimov preached Salafism, a radical movement that endorses a highly traditional form of Islam, Dagestan police spokesman Vyacheslav Gasanov told the Associated Press.

Investigators have opened a criminal case on charges of murder and illegal weapons trafficking in connection with the killings.

Ibragimov is the fifth religious leader killed in the republic this year and the [ninth](#) in the last 2 1/2 years, according to media reports.

Dagestani President Magomedsalam Magomedov has said that more than [30 high-profile religious leaders](#) have been killed in the republic in the last 14 years.

The most recent killing of a cleric in the republic was on Oct. 13, when masked gunmen shot dead [imam Ismail Gadzhiyev](#) in the village of Uchkent, news portal Caucasian Knot reported. Gunmen killed [imam Magomedkamil Gamzatov](#) in the village of Karamakhi in late June.

In August, a female suicide bomber killed moderate Muslim cleric Said Atsayev, 74, at his home in Chirkei, detonating an explosive belt packed with nails and ball bearings. She and six others died in the blast.

Imam Gitinmagomed Abdulgapurov, who criticized radical Islamists, was killed in March along with his bodyguard by a powerful explosion as they were walking to a mosque for prayer.

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