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Suspect Named in Killing of Nalchik TV Anchor

By The Moscow Times

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Police named a suspect in last week's killing of a television anchor in Kabardino-Balkaria, and they linked the alleged killer to the slaying of a police officer and attacks on other law enforcement officers.

Kazbek Gekkiyev, 28, was fatally shot in the head the night of Dec. 5 outside the offices of his TV studio in Nalchik. Investigators and media observers tied Gekkiyev's killing, reportedly carried out by two people, to his job as an anchor for evening news show Vesti KBR.

The Investigative Committee last week called it "a threat to other journalists who recount the results of the fight [of authorities] with the bandit underground functioning in the republic," where Islamic militants are battling law enforcement.

The North Caucasus branch of the Investigative Committee said in a statement late Monday that Zeitun Boziyev, born in 1982 and a Nalchik native, played a role in Gekkiyev's murder.

It said Boziyev also took part in the murder of two government employees in November 2011, a traffic police inspector in June and the attempted murders of Interior Ministry soldiers and an Interior Ministry employee in Kabardino-Balkaria, also in June.

Ballistics analysis "gave investigators reason to believe that Gekkiyev's murder was carried out with the same weapon that was used in attacks on law enforcement employees," said the local division of the Investigative Committee, which investigated jointly with the Interior Ministry and the Federal Security Service.

As a result, the criminal investigation into Gekkiyev's murder is being joined with the other investigations in one case.

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Gekkiyev's TV show, Vesti KBR, is the local edition of a national news show of the same name aired on Rossia 1 television and broadcast by the state-run VGTRK media holding.

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