

Dagestan Deputy Killed in Security Operation

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Investigators in Dagestan are trying to determine what a local United Russia deputy was doing with suspected militants during a special operation last week in which seven men were killed.

Police said five alleged militants were killed in the firefight, among them a United Russia deputy identified as Magomedkhabib Magomedaliyev, in the Dagestan village of Semender, RIA-Novosti reported Thursday. Two special forces troops were also killed and six were injured.

Magomedaliyev was elected to the municipal assembly of the Untsukul'sky district in 2010 on United Russia's party ticket. The local election commission's website [shows](#) that he had a criminal record when he was elected, with prior convictions of firearms possession and large-scale fraud.

Rasul Temirbekov, a spokesman for the republic's branch of the Investigative Committee, said Friday that investigators would need two months to determine the circumstances of Magomedaliyev's presence at the scene of the operation.

The investigation is complicated by the fact that the house in which the men were killed burned down in the course of the gun battle, rendering any evidence obsolete and making identification of the remaining four men difficult.

According to Lenta.ru, all that is known about the operation is that security forces surrounded a home believed to belong to militants and demanded that everyone exit the building. After five women and a child came out, shooting began from inside and a firefight with security forces ensued. All five men inside were killed.

Dagestan is ranked among the most dangerous places in Europe. Experts have expressed skepticism regarding reports about the security operations frequently carried out in the republic, noting that there is no way to verify whether a person is a militant or not before such an assault.

Relatives of Magomedaliyev have said he may have been set up by members of the local administration, with whom he had an ongoing conflict, Lenta.ru reported.

Local Communist deputy Valery Rashkin has demanded an explanation from law enforcement agencies on how a "militant" with prior convictions could be allowed on United Russia's party list in the first place, Interfax reported.

The State Duma is currently considering legislation that would prohibit people convicted of grave criminal offenses from holding political office.

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