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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Interior Ministry Announces Tender for Suicide Bomber Detector

By The Moscow Times

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Amid the search for new ways to prevent terrorist attacks, the Interior Ministry has announced an open tender to develop a device able to remotely detect explosives worn by suicide bombers.

The gadget would have to detect explosive devices concealed on the human body from up to 10 meters away with 98-percent reliability, according to the order by the ministry's special equipment division.

The ministry said it would pay a maximum of 39 million rubles ($1.2 million) for the device, which the order said should be able to boot up within five minutes, process signals in half a second or less, and signal positive readings with audio and visual indicators.

Design ideas for the device must be submitted by Jan. 29 and the result of the tender will be announced Feb. 12, the statement posted on the government procurement site said.

The gadgets should be ready for use by Nov. 15, 2016.

Anxiety about terrorist attacks is higher than usual in Russia following a recent series of suicide bombings in the southern city of Volgograd. In back-to-back strikes on Dec. 29 and 30, two suicide bombers blew up a city train station and a trolleybus, killing 34 people and injuring nearly 80 others. Investigators have not officially named any suspects in the attacks, though radical Islamic militants from Russia's North Caucasus region are suspected of being behind the deadly blasts.

The bombings, two months after another suicide bombing on a bus in Volgograd, came just weeks ahead of Russia's hosting of the Winter Olympic Games, which open in Sochi on February 7.

In October, NATO and Russia unveiled a bomb detection system titled STANDEX that they said could identify threats in large crowds of people. It was not immediately clear whether the device commissioned by Russia's Interior Ministry would be connected to STANDEX technology, which is still being tested.

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