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Suspected Organizer of Grozny Suicide Bombing Killed in Shootout, Police Say

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Investigators work at the site of a blast at the entrance to a concert hall in Grozny, October 5, 2014.

Chechen police on Saturday found and killed the suspected organizer of this month's suicide bombing in the regional capital Grozny, the Interior Ministry said in a statement on its website.

The suspect, identified as 33-year-old Aslan Aliskhanov, had been on the government's wanted list for involvement in illegal armed gangs, the statement said.

On Saturday, a tip-off led authorities to an abandoned building on the outskirts of Grozny, where Aliskhanov opened fire on police and was killed in the shootout that ensued, Magomed Deniyev, a spokesman for the republic's branch of the Interior Ministry, was cited as saying by RIA Novosti.

The incident took place two days after reports emerged that authorities had posted flyers all over Grozny with Aliskhanov's photo and a warning that he was plotting a suicide attack.

Aliskhanov was wearing a suicide vest at the time of the police confrontation with him Saturday, and a bomb squad had to be dispatched to disarm it, the Gazeta.ru news website reported.

Police say Aliskhanov was an accomplice of Apti Mudarov, the 19-year-old suicide bomber who killed five policemen and injured a dozen others when he blew himself up in Grozny on Oct. 5.

In July, the news website Kavkazpress.ru said Aliskhanov had belonged to a militant Islamic group led by a close ally of the late Doku Umarov, the previous leader of the jihadist organization Caucasus Emirate who was killed by security forces last year.

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