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Massive Manhunt for Vladivostok Fugitive Ends in Suicide

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Citizen report claimed Bespalov had been spotted in a city apartment block.

A Vladivostok prisoner who had been on the lam since his violent escape earlier this week, terrorizing the city with a days-long crime spree, ended his own life as police circled in on him Thursday.

On Tuesday, as three police escorts attempted to drive Bespalov and another prisoner back to their colony, Bespalov seized a gun from one of the officers and opened fire, a regional branch of the Interior Ministry reported. One officer died on the spot, and another was rushed to a hospital with serious wounds. The third officer — the driver — was not injured.

After the attack, Bespalov fled the scene and reportedly proceeded to engage in a rapid-fire succession of crimes. State news agency TASS reported Tuesday that he stole clothing from a female pensioner. He also threatened to kill a bus driver, and robbed and temporarily abducted a young woman, the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday.

Investigators warned residents to be on the lookout for Bespalov, a man in his early 40s who walked with a pronounced limp. As his leg had been amputated below the knee, he used a prosthetic limb.

Citizen reports began pouring in — 149 in total — asserting sitings of men who resembled Bespalov, the regional Interior Ministry branch said in a statement on Thursday.

One such report claimed Bespalov had been spotted in a city apartment block.

Two policemen arrived to investigate the building, initially blocking the elevator on the first floor, and then ascending the stairs, checking each level along the way, the official statement said.

On the 12th floor, the police found the fugitive standing in the corridor.

As Bespalov locked eyes with the approaching officers, he shot himself in the head.

Medics rushed to the scene, but were unable to revive him.

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