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Moderate Tajik Cleric Stabbed in Moscow

By The Moscow Times

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The Tajik Embassy praised Dostakov as a moderate preacher known for his public criticism of extremist terrorist groups including the Islamic State.

The Tajik Embassy has expressed its concern over a young Tajik cleric who was stabbed by unknown assailants last week in Moscow and remains hospitalized in a serious condition, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday.

The attack on Khairiddin Dostakov, also known as Khairiddin Abdullah, was carried out by several assailants armed with knives on Friday evening near the Ryazansky Prospekt metro station in southeast Moscow, according to RIA Novosti.

The Tajik Embassy praised Dostakov as a moderate preacher known for his public criticism of extremist terrorist groups including the Islamic State.

“This person has excellent theological knowledge, is very cultured and careful ... he always

stands up against extreme groups and radical tendencies that give a bad name to Islam," embassy spokesman Muhammed Egamzod told Ozodi Radio, the Tajik Service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, on Sunday.

Dostakov is currently in a critical condition in the hospital but the Tajik Embassy said that doctors were optimistic he would recover, RIA Novosti reported.

The incident is not the first time Dostakov has been attacked. The cleric was left with a concussion in 2012 after being assaulted, and last year he was robbed in his apartment by armed men wearing masks, according to RIA Novosti.

Governments in largely Muslim Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan, have warned repeatedly about the threat from Islamic extremists and the Islamic State is known to have recruited fighters from the region to join its forces in Syria and Iraq.

There are approximately 100,000 Tajiks living in Russia, according to official figures, but that number is assumed to be higher because of significant illegal labor migration.

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