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Shots Fired at Moscow Region Candidate During Meeting Over Controversial Landfill

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Lilia Belova / Press Service

Shots were fired at a candidate running for a gubernatorial post in the Moscow region during a meeting with voters over controversial plans to build a landfill in the area, and a suspect in the shooting was later apprehended, media reported on Thursday.

Toxic emissions from waste disposal sites have become the subject of mass rallies in several Moscow region towns this year. Residents in the Sergiyevo-Posadsky district north of Moscow have protested plans to build a new landfill in the area by intermittently blocking roads leading to one of the construction sites.

Green Alliance party candidate Lilia Belova was shot at by an unknown gunman at the end of a meeting with voters opposed to the construction of the new landfill, her campaign headquarters told the state-run TASS news agency on Wednesday.

On Thursday, the RIA Novosti news agency cited district police as saying the suspected shooter has been detained. He is thought to have used an air gun.

Belova was unharmed in the incident, and filed a police report following the shooting.

A local activist reported on social media that several residents were sent to emergency rooms after the vehicle ran into the crowd.

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Footage of the incident published on YouTube showed residents confronting law enforcement officers after the incidents. "They're running over children," a woman's voice is heard screaming. "Go find them."

Among Belova's campaign platforms is a position against the practice of bringing garbage from Moscow to dump in landfills outside the city, and in favor of introducing recycling.

The civic chamber of the Sergiyevo-Posadsky district has also publicly opposed plans to construct a new landfill in the area.

Gubernatorial, regional and municipal elections in Moscow and other regions around Russia are scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 9.

The incumbent governor of the Moscow region, Andrei Vorobyov, is expected to secure re-election.

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