

Plane 'Hijacker' Had Terror Tip for Putin

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A Kazakh businessman who caused a hijacking scare at Moscow's Domodedovo Airport last week denied hijacking charges Saturday and said he had wanted to give information to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin about the metro suicide bombings in March.

Magomed Patiyev, 40, refused to let the other 104 passengers and crew leave a plane upon arrival from Mineralniye Vody on Thursday until he met with Putin, investigators said.

Patiyev said Saturday that he had only wanted to pass to Putin unspecified information about who orchestrated the twin blasts in the Moscow metro that killed 40 passengers on March 29, Interfax reported.

Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Patiyev, who was born and works in Almaty and also holds a residency permit for Ingushetia, was unarmed and made no direct threats during the 2 1/2-hour standoff on a plane operated by the Kavminvodyavia airline, Interfax said. Police disguised as medics boarded the aircraft after a passenger fell ill and detained Patiyev, who faces up to five years in prison on charges of illegally depriving people of freedom.

The Investigative Committee opened a criminal investigation Friday.

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