

Lawyer: Theater Hostage Crisis Probe Reopened

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The  **Moscow Times**

The 2002 Dubrovka hostage crisis will be reinvestigated because some of the terrorists involved in the attack have escaped, despite official reports to the contrary, a lawyer said Monday.

The Moscow branch of the Investigative Committee will restart the criminal probe on the order of Moscow's Prosecutor General's Office, Igor Trunov, who represents the victims of the attack, told Interfax.

He said the victims managed to convince the law enforcement agencies that some of the attackers and equipment they used, including guns, satellite telephones and a laptop, were unaccounted for.

"We substantiated our claims, and prosecutors and investigators accepted our proof," he said.

Trunov said at least four terrorists have escaped, and identified one of them as Abubakar Elmurzayev, Itar-Tass [reported](#). He cited accounts of unidentified witnesses as proof.

No officials commented on the report Monday, and inquiries submitted to investigators and prosecutors went unanswered.

In October 2002, a group of 41 Chechen rebels seized a theater in southeastern Moscow, taking more than 900 people hostage.

Authorities resolved a three-day standoff by pumping the building full of a military chemical agent, which was supposed to knock people out, but killed many hostages. The total body count for hostages stood at 129, and all terrorists were reported to be killed.

Only one man, Zaurbek Talkhigov, was convicted over the incident, with a Moscow court sentencing him in 2003 to 8 1/2 years in prison for informing the terrorists via cell phone of activities of law enforcement officers during the siege. The investigation was ended later that year.

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