

## Lawyer Calling for Sharia Courts to Be Checked for Extremism

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Muslim lawyer Dagir Khasavov appearing Tuesday in a program on Ren-TV.

A Muslim lawyer erroneously reported to be an aide to a Federation Council member will be investigated on extremism charges after making controversial comments regarding the need to create Sharia courts in Russia.

Dagir Khasavov said in an interview with Ren-TV on Tuesday that any attempts to prevent the creation of Islamic law courts would end in "bloodshed" and a "second Dead Sea."

"Muslims don't want to get involved in the court system," Khasavov said. "You think that we come here to Russia as to some foreign place. But we believe that we're at home here. Perhaps you're foreign and we're at home. And we will institute rules that suit us, whether you want that or not."

"Any attempts to stop this will end in bloodshed. There will be a second Dead Sea here — we will fill the city with blood," he said.

Khasavov's words were reported by other media outlets Wednesday and discussed in the Russian blogosphere. Police said the comments would be checked for signs of extremism and inciting ethnic hatred, Interfax reported.

In media reports, Khasavov was called an aide to "the chairman of the Committee on Social Policy and Healthcare" in the Federation Council, but in fact there is no such committee, Interfax reported.

The upper house of parliament instead has a Committee on Social Policy, whose chair Valery Ryazansky told the news agency that he had never heard Khasavov's name before. A Federation Council spokesperson said the lawyer is not listed as an aide to any senator.

In the Ren-TV report, Khasavov is called a lawyer creating an organization for defending the rights of Muslims. No mention is made of his being an aide to a Federation Council member.

Russian mufti Talgat Tadzhuiddin said Wednesday that he is against the creation of separate Islamic courts.

"In accord with the constitution, there is separation of church and state in Russia," he told Interfax. "Our country has its own judicial system, and Muslims use it as citizens possessing equal rights."

Sharia courts make decisions based on Islamic law, which is derived in part from principles contained in the Islamic holy book the Quran.

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