

Arrested Makhachkala Mayor Denies Reported Suicide Attempt

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A former mayor of Makhachkala who was charged earlier this month with ordering the murder of an investigator has denied reports that he had tried to commit suicide.

“I did not attempt [to commit suicide] and never will,” Said Amirov, who had served as mayor of the capital of Dagestan since 1998, told journalists Friday at a Moscow court, which ruled to suspend him from his post.

A police spokeswoman earlier said Amirov was taken to a prison hospital following a suicide attempt. An unidentified prison service official told Izvestia that a guard had found the 59-year-old with “deep cuts on his right arm, left wrist and both shins,” but that “it was hard to establish whether Amirov actually planned to take his own life.”

Amirov’s lawyer, Mark Kruter, confirmed that his client, who suffers from diabetes and hepatitis C and is confined to a wheelchair, had been transferred from Moscow’s Lefortovo

pretrial detention center to a hospital at the Butyrka prison.

He said Amirov would have “more comfortable conditions” at the hospital, but he did not confirm or deny the reported suicide attempt.

One of the most powerful men in the North Caucasus, Amirov was detained on June 1 on suspicion that he masterminded the December 2011 killing of investigator Arsen Gadzhibekov in the Dagestan city of Kaspiisk. Amirov was subsequently taken to Moscow, where a judge ordered him to be placed into pretrial custody.

Amirov, who according to his lawyer has survived at least 14 assassination attempts, has denied the murder charge and denounced the case as politically motivated. Russian authorities have detained at least 11 people in connection with the case and have said more suspects may be involved.

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