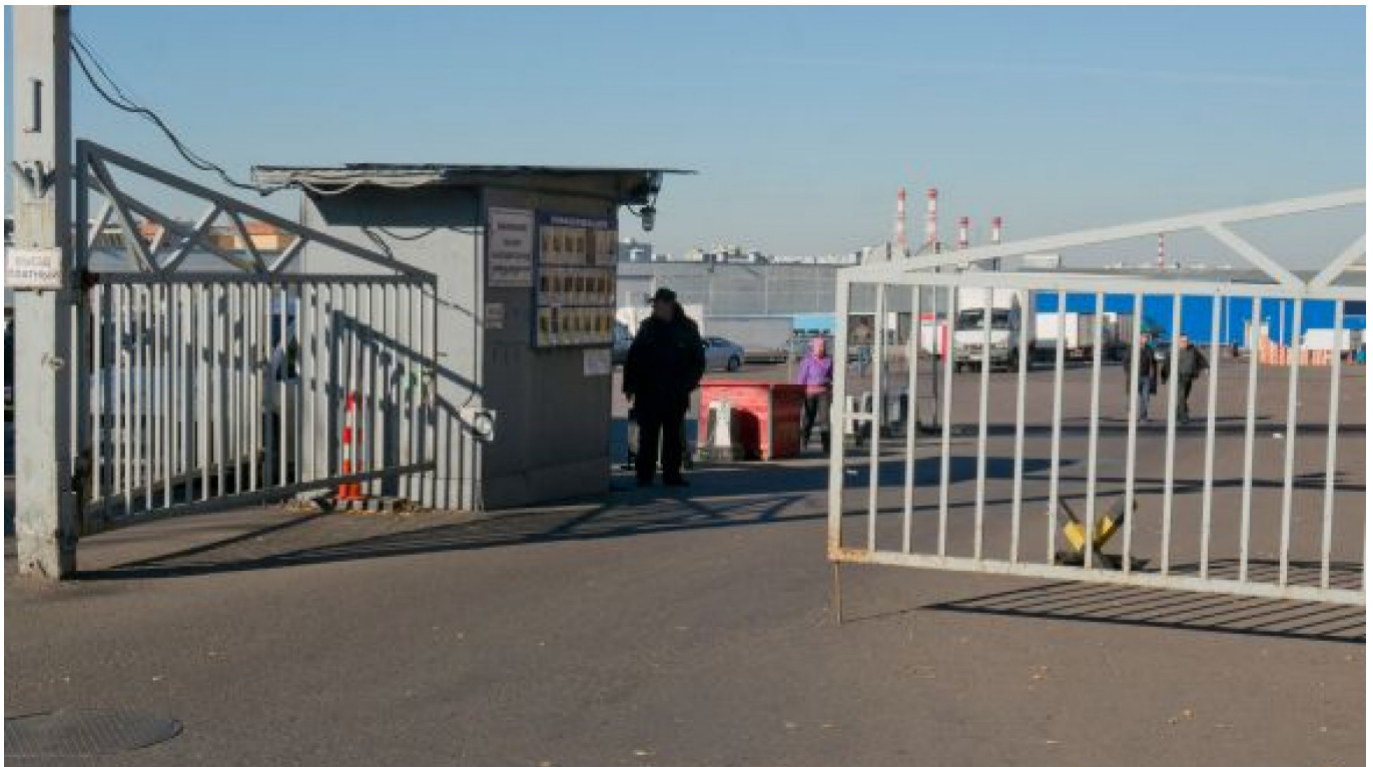


Biryulyovo Killing Suspect Confesses, Investigators Say

By [Allison Quinn](#)

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A guard standing at the entrance to the Biryulyovo warehouse on Monday. **Vladimir Filonov**

The Azeri suspect in a deadly stabbing that triggered an anti-migrant riot in Moscow's Biryulyovo district has confessed to the killing and requested an interpreter for his case, saying he “forgot Russian,” investigators said Wednesday.

The news of the apparent language barrier further emphasizes the ethnic dimension of the case, which has already sparked nationalist rallies throughout the city and may have played a role in two recent killings, one of an Uzbek man near Biryulyovo and another of an Azeri man in eastern Moscow.

Investigators Wednesday also announced the closure of the vegetable warehouse where the Biryulyovo killing suspect was employed and said criminal charges would be brought against the warehouse's management for “organizing illegal migration.” The charges carry a maximum punishment of seven years in prison.

Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin, said the suspect in the Biryulyovo stabbing, Orkhan Zeinalov, moved to Russia from Azerbaijan more than 10 years ago but had "suddenly forgotten the Russian language" and needed an interpreter.

"Such characters are nothing new to us," Markin said in a statement. "They all have enough Russian to live in Russia, to move freely around its territory, to settle all their personal issues here. But as soon as they have to take responsibility for their actions, these characters tend to abruptly forget the language of the country they chose for their comfortable living."

Despite his difficulties with the Russian language, Zeinalov confessed to last week's stabbing of Yegor Shcherbakov, Markin said.

The confession comes after thousands of people rioted Sunday in Biryulyovo, demanding that authorities take action against the large proportion of migrants from the Caucasus and Central Asia employed at the local vegetable warehouse.

Nationalist protests flared up again Tuesday — as Muslims throughout the city celebrated the holiday of Eid al-Adha — with more than 200 people detained near Prazhskaya metro station during an unsanctioned rally.

In a separate incident, the body of an Uzbek man with multiple stab wounds was found late Tuesday in a neighborhood near the Biryulyovo district, close to the scene of the recent riots.

It remained unclear whether the killing was related to the protests or was motivated by heightened ethnic tensions in the city. An unidentified police official said investigators are looking at various possible motives for the killing but believe the death most likely occurred during a drunken brawl between drinking buddies, BaltInfo reported.

On Wednesday, the body of an Azeri man was found with knife wounds in front of a shopping center in eastern Moscow. Investigators poured cold water on the notion that the killing was the work of nationalists, saying that according to preliminary findings it was the result of a conflict "between citizens of one of the CIS countries," Interfax reported. The investigation is ongoing.

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