

Investigation into Journalist's Death Reopened

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Investigators on Thursday reopened for a second time a criminal inquiry into the mysterious 2003 death of investigative journalist and State Duma Deputy Yuri Shchekochikhin.

The Investigative Committee said [in a statement](#) that it had uncovered new evidence that suggested Shchekochikhin had been murdered.

The statement offered no further details.

Investigators initially ruled out foul play and said Shchekochikhin had died from an unspecified allergic reaction.

They reopened the case in 2008 and exhumed Shchekochikhin's body. But in April 2009, they said no evidence had been found of murder and Shchekochikhin had died of toxic epidermal necrolysis, also known as Lyell Syndrome, a severe skin disease.

Shchekochikhin's colleagues at the opposition-minded [Novaya Gazeta](#) newspaper maintain

that he had been poisoned with a rare toxin and have led their own investigation into his death.

When he died, Shchekochikhin was spearheading a parliamentary investigation into [a furniture-smuggling case](#) at Tri Kita that implicated senior officers from the Federal Security Service and the Prosecutor General's Office. Former Tri Kita owner Sergei Zuyev was sentenced to eight years in prison on smuggling charges in April.

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