

Kazakh Paper Publisher Missing

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ALMATY, Kazakhstan — The director of a publishing house for Kazakhstan's most outspoken independent newspaper has gone missing, say reporters, fearing that he may have been kidnapped.

The Respublika weekly's deputy editor Oksana Makushina said Thursday that Daniyar Moldashev told colleagues he had left for Belarus in a brief telephone call on Wednesday, but he seemed nervous and spoke quickly.

She said his phone could not be reached afterward.

Moldashev had recently been beaten and robbed outside his apartment in Almaty after returning from a trip to Russia.

Police say they are investigating the case, but could not confirm any kidnapping.

Respublika has been unusually vocal in its criticism of the nation's authoritarian government.

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