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Chechen Cop Suspected in Accidental Killing of 17-Year-Old

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A Chechen police officer has been arrested on suspicion of having accidentally shot and killed a 17-year-old school student in the village of Tolstoi-Yurt, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported Monday.

The boy's body was found inside a Zhiguli on Saturday evening with a bullet in his chest. On Sunday, a 20-year-old police officer was arrested for the crime, having told police that he accidentally shot the boy while off duty, an unnamed source told the state-run daily.

Deputy head of the Chechen Investigative Committee Maryam Malayeva told the paper that the two boys were friends and neighbors who lived on the same street and that the younger of them constantly wanted to hold his friend's service weapon. The young officer finally let him, having thought the safety was on, and the gun went off by accident, Malayeva said.

The regional investigator did not say how the gun ended up being fired or who was responsible.

The incident comes in the wake of a major police violence scandal in Kazan, where a group

of officers are accused of having fatally beat and raped a 52-year-old man detained for an administrative offense. Last week, a senior Interior Ministry official announced reforms in response to the case, including redesigning police stations to minimize the risk of crimes by officers.

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