

Kadyrov Calls Instagram 'Useful' Work Tool

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The Chechen leader mostly posts photographs of himself to his Instagram account. He appears in a wide variety of settings, including in his car, in an elevator and at a zoo feeding tigers.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov on Monday talked up photo-sharing app Instagram as an effective way of solving pressing social issues in the North Caucasus republic.

“In fact, it’s a very useful thing,” Kadyrov said of Instagram, according to a statement on the Chechen government’s official website.

Kadyrov, a flamboyant ex-rebel whom President Vladimir Putin appointed to govern Chechnya in 2007, set up an Instagram [account](#) in late January and said the app has allowed him to “monitor public opinion in real time.”

“I have learned about people’s problems, about their aspirations. And my workload has increased. Whereas for some people Instagram is a way of relaxing, for me it’s an added burden,” Kadyrov said.

In the two weeks since he signed up on Instagram, Kadyrov has uploaded more than 170 photos, dozens of which feature the strongman leader striking eyebrow-raising poses, feeding hungry predators and generally milling around.

But Kadyrov, who now has more than 40,000 followers, seemed keener to stress Instagram's effectiveness as a work tool Monday, saying he had reviewed 956 appeals for help over the past three days and had awarded houses, land plots and jobs to citizens seeking assistance.

"Help will be given to all those who truly need it," Kadyrov said.

He said in a caption to one of his photos that he got the idea to set up an Instagram account from television personality Tina Kandelaki, who told him of its value as a communication tool.

On Monday, Kadyrov posted a photo of himself in an elevator lined with mirrors and gold trim beside a photo of Kandelaki standing in her elevator, where she often photographs herself.

"Dear @tina_kandelaki, I've observed your elevator for a long time, and I must admit, the quality ... leaves something to be desired. Look at the elevator that I photographed myself in. This is how they build in Chechnya!"

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