

New Bill Proposes Harsher Sanctions for Threats to Journalists

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A day after journalist Akhmednabi Akhmednabiyev was gunned down in Dagestan, two State Duma deputies have introduced a bill aimed at toughening penalties for violence against members of the media, a news report said Wednesday.

Valery Trapeznikov of United Russia and Mikhail Serdyuk of A Just Russia said they submitted the bill because the number of assaults on journalists had increased in recent times both in public and in the workplace.

Akhmednabiyev, 55, deputy editor for the weekly Novoye Delo newspaper, was shot and killed Tuesday morning in his car by an unknown assailant in the village of Semender.

The proposed bill would introduce a fine of up to 200,000 rubles (\$6,000) or a prison sentence of up to five years for threatening or assaulting a journalist. If it is established that the journalist's life was in danger, the prison sentence could rise to 10 years.

Trapeznikov stressed that protection should be strengthened for journalists involved in investigative reporting on corruption.

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