

Chechen Strongman Kadyrov to Take Control of Colleges

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov said he would re-establish control over the region's flailing education system.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has said he will be sending his representatives into the republic's leading colleges to re-establish control over the flailing education system.

The North Caucasus republic's two universities and teachers' college are failing to deliver competitive education, Kadyrov wrote late Tuesday on his Instagram account, his preferred channel for public statements.

"I have decided to deploy my representatives there to take strict control of the educational process, [and] draft proposals," Kadyrov said.

Kadyrov, 38, did not elaborate on who his representatives were, nor which academic credentials they held.

His inner circle is known to comprise many former Islamist militants pardoned in the 2000s,

but it is unclear whether any of them will be deployed to colleges to boost their efficiency.

Kadyrov boasts several diplomas, including degrees in law and economics, as well as a slew of honorary degrees, mostly from local universities.

His higher education was obtained after he took important positions in the Chechen government in the 2000s, apparently pulling off an intricate balancing act of studying law and economy while managing a war-torn region.

Students in the North Caucasus, a predominantly Muslim region, are widely seen as potential recruits for Islamic fundamentalists. Kadyrov was an Islamist militant himself, but has strongly denounced the radicals ever since he left their ranks for a state pardon and a governmental job in 1999.

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