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Russian Man's Visit to Kazan Police Leaves Him With Burst Intestine

By Peter Spinella

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Days after a pair of Moscow region police officers were detained on suspicion of having coerced a theft confession with dozens of electric shocks, news broke that a man in the Russian city of Kazan is seeking damages from federal and regional authorities after a police interrogation left him with broken ribs and a ruptured intestine.

The Kazan man is seeking 800,000 rubles ($14,000) from Russia's Finance Ministry, local news site OpenInform reported Monday. Tatarstan's regional Interior Ministry branch and former police officer Razil Karimov, who was sentenced last month to three and a half years in a penal colony for having inflicted the damage, were listed as third parties in the man's complaint.

Karimov was convicted of violent abuse of power after investigators alleged that he had dragged the victim — who had been detained for an administrative offense — into the corridor of a police station and punched and kicked him repeatedly, according to OpenInform, which added that Karimov was subsequently fired.

Last week two Moscow region police officers were detained on suspicion of having resorted to dozens of electric shocks in a bid to compel a 27-year-old woman to confess to theft, investigators said in a statement.

The unnamed officers, who worked in the Moscow suburb of Mytishchi, are accused of having covered the woman's head with a plastic bag during an interrogation, and then administered at least 35 electric shocks, the Investigative Committee said Friday, citing an examination of the victim.

The officers, aged 34 and 35, face charges of violent abuse of authority, punishable by three to 10 years in prison. Authorities are currently deciding whether to remand the officers to a pretrial detention center, the statement said.

Allegations of police violence are not unprecedented in Russia. An officer in the Siberian region of Altai was recently convicted on a similar charge but managed to avoid going to prison, the Kommersant newspaper reported Monday.

That officer was given a suspended sentence after being found guilty of using electric shocks to compel a confession.

In a case that had hit the national media spotlight, the highest court in Russia's Tatarstan region last month upheld a decision to send several former police officers to prison for up to 13 years for the death of a detainee who was reportedly sodomized with a champagne bottle.

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