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Suspect in Murder of Russian Opposition Leader Nemtsov Changes Alibi

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Zaur Dadayev, suspected of involvement in the killing of opposition figure Boris Nemtsov, is seen on a screen installed inside a court building during a hearing in Moscow Apr. 1.

The new lawyer of Zaur Dadayev, the main suspect in the murder of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, announced Thursday that his client was changing his alibi and revising his account of the events that followed his arrest, the RBC news agency reported.

Dadayev's defense had initially claimed that he had been dining at a local restaurant on the night of Feb. 27, when Nemtsov was gunned down on a bridge near the Kremlin.

Shamsudin Tsakayev, who became Dadayev's lawyer only in recent days, told RBC that his client did in fact have an alibi, but that it did not correspond with the one cited in earlier legal proceedings.

"We have another alibi that we will currently not reveal to safeguard the interests of the defense," RBC quoted Tsakayev as saying.

Tsakayev also claimed that Dadayev, a former deputy commander in Chechnya's Sever police battalion, had been coerced into providing incriminating evidence against his former colleague Ruslan Geremeyev.

Investigators have accused Geremeyev — referred to in court documents as "Rusik," a diminutive form of the name Ruslan — of having provided Dadayev with the murder weapon and a getaway car.

Dadayev, who has claimed that he confessed to Nemtsov's murder under duress, has said that "Rusik" was a "fictional character who was invented by the people who tortured" him during his interrogation, Tsakayev told RBC.

Human rights activists have said that wounds found on Dadayev's body, including abrasions around his nose, wrists and legs, were inflicted after he was detained.

The chairman of Moscow's Public Oversight Commission, Anton Tsvetkov, said last month that his organization had not found evidence that Dadayev had been tortured in detention.

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