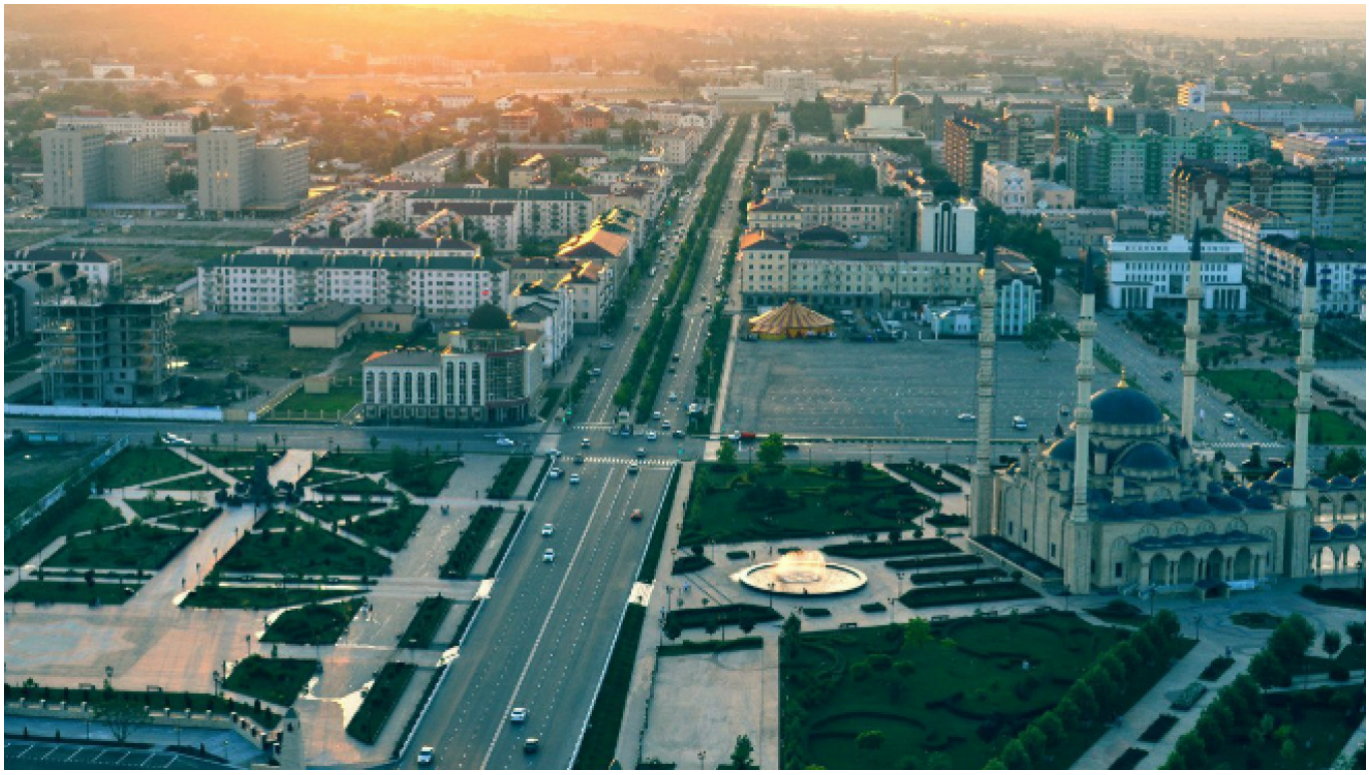
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Groznyland: Kadyrov Announces New Amusement Park in Chechen Capital

By The Moscow Times

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov announced that work has begun on a large new amusement park in the regional capital Grozny, aimed at attracting tourists to the once war-torn region.

The park will cover 55 hectares and include a dolphinarium, a family zone and bike paths, Kadyrov said last week on his account on the Instagram photo sharing application.

"Today we have made yet another step on the road toward turning Chechnya into a tourist region," Kadyrov wrote. Kadyrov, a hulking 38-year old former militia leader who has implemented elements of Sharia law in the republic in the north Caucasus, frequently makes major announcements on Instagram, where he has over a million followers.

Much of Grozny, as well as Chechnya as a whole, suffered serious damage in two bloody wars between the Russian army and local separatists in the 1990s and early 2000s. The region has seen a sharp revival in recent years, however, with massive subsidies from Moscow.

Kadyrov said the amusement park, so far unnamed, would be funded through private investment but did not identify investors or give a timeline for the park's completion.

The planned park will stand near the grandiose Grozny Sea resort, a 300-hectare complex under construction in the city. Regional news website Yug.ru reported in 2012 that the resort would cost 21.5 billion rubles ($400 million).

Grozny already has one other amusement park, the National Park of Akhmad-Hadji Kadyrov, opened in 2012 and named after Kadyrov's father, a Russian-backed militant who became the head of Chechnya before his assassination in 2004.

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