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Chechen Leader Kadyrov Restricts Access to Popular Instagram Account

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov

Chechen leader and popular Instagram aficionado Ramzan Kadyrov has restricted public access to his account on the popular photo-sharing site, allowing him to vet all new subscribers to his account.

Kadyrov, 38, has been a prolific Instagram user since February 2013, and also maintains accounts on popular Russian social network VKontakte, Facebook, Twitter and LiveJournal. Last year, media monitoring site Medialogia named him the most oft-cited Russian blogger, the TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

Kadyrov favors his Instagram account for making public statements and has more than 1.1 million subscribers to his page. He has posted almost 5,400 photographs and commentaries on the site, including a wealth of comments and photos praising Russian President Vladimir Putin.

But following his decision to make his Instagram page private, anyone wishing to view posts

and photographs on the strongman leader's page will now have to gain his approval first — giving him the opportunity to restrict access to journalists and critics.

According to Instagram's website, setting an account to "private" will not impact his 1.1 million followers. In order to weed out preexisting followers, the Chechen leader would be required to block the accounts of individual followers.

Last month, Kadyrov took to Instagram to invite any of his followers to attend the wedding of a middle-aged Chechen police chief who took a 17-year-old girl as his second wife. He later uploaded a video to Instagram of himself dancing at the controversial wedding.

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