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European Investigators Arrive in Chechnya as 7 People Abducted

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Dmitry Serebryakov / TASS

Members of a European torture prevention committee have been allowed into Chechnya this week for inspections as reports surface that seven people were abducted in the southern Russian republic last month.

The delegation from the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture is studying documents, interviewing torture victims and investigating Chechnya's prisons, the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper reported Tuesday.

Earlier this year, the newspaper reported that more than 100 gay men were detained and tortured in secret prisons in the region.

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The arrival of the delegation coincided with the release of a human rights report published on Tuesday that said at least seven Grozny residents were abducted in late November, Novaya Gazeta's story added.

The kidnapped people were being held "in inhuman conditions," according to the report published by the Memorial human rights organization. "They are in unheated rooms and are practically not given any food."

The seven victims were all listed as men between the ages of 25 and 35, and were reportedly being held at a National Guard compound, the report says.

At least two of the men were kidnapped in front of their relatives by unidentified security officials who arrived by car, according to the human rights organization.

Memorial wrote that it plans to raise the issue with Russia's Investigative Committee and human rights ombudsman.

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