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Russian Environmentalist's Beating Tied to Medvedev's Alleged Mansion

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Andrei Rudomakha / Facebook

A prominent environmental activist may have been beaten late last month for documenting the illegal construction of a mansion linked to Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper reported Sunday.

Andrei Rudomakha, the coordinator of the Environmental Watch on North Caucasus (EWNC) group, was diagnosed with traumatic brain injuries, facial fractures and a chemical eye burn after being attacked by masked men in the southern Russian city of Krasnodar in late December.

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Prior to the beating, Rudomakha and his colleagues had been investigating the construction of what ENWC claims is a dacha being built illegally for Medvedev on the Black Sea coast.

The EWNC says that the firm overseeing the construction is headed by a business partner of President Vladimir Putin's classmate.

"Everything says that this was the work of people from the Krasnodar department of the FSB who recruited the people wearing the masks," Rudomakha was cited as saying by Novaya Gazeta on Sunday.

According to Rudomakha, security camera footage shows the men arriving at the scene an hour before the attack and taking up positions just before the appearance of the environmental activists.

Novaya Gazeta cites official Federal Security Service (FSB) documents in its possession that suggest the security services have been behind the persecution of EWNC activists from as early as July 2016.

Since the beating, Rudomakha and his colleague have received death threats from an anonymous sender, whose email address translates as "Death to Rudomakha," telling them to get out of the country.

More than 112,000 people have signed a Change.org petition calling on the Russian authorities to investigate the attack on Rudomakha and his EWNC colleagues.

Authorities have reportedly launched a robbery investigation into the Dec. 28 attack, naming Rudomakha and two of his colleagues as victims.

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