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Russian Politician Appeals to Putin Over Alleged Death Threats Amid Garbage Protests

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Alexander Shestun **Youtube**

A Russian politician opposing a toxic landfill outside Moscow has complained to President Vladimir Putin about receiving death threats from senior officials in the Kremlin administration and security services.

Residents of nine towns and cities in the Moscow region have taken to the streets this month to protest against toxic garbage dumps, including at the Lesnaya landfill in the Serpukhov district 100 kilometers south of Russia's capital.

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“Dear Vladimir Vladimirovich [Putin], the governor of Moscow region [Andrei] Vorobyov is trying to eliminate me for [...] opposing the placement of a gigantic flow of trash from Moscow,” Serpukhov district head Alexander Shestun said in a video published Thursday.

Shestun named a Federal Security Services (FSB) department head, Ivan Tkachev, and chief of the Kremlin’s domestic policy directorate, Andrei Yarin, as the key figures who had threatened him in separate meetings this month.

Authorities carried out raids at the Serpukhov district administration half an hour after regional legislators voted to introduce direct elections in the district in early April, Shestun said.

“They will bury you before the [district] elections,” Tkachev threatened in an audio recording included in Shestun’s address to Putin.

Shestun cited Yarin as saying that he would face “trumped-up criminal cases” and would have his home seized if he did not step down.

Shestun has headed the Serpukhov district since 2003.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Friday that the presidential administration has not yet heard Shestov’s appeal, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Friday.

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