

Report Links Murders of 3 Russian Journalists in CAR to 'Putin's Chef'

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Anvar Galejev / TASS

A new investigation has strengthened suspicions that three journalists murdered in CAR last summer were not merely the victims of a robbery, as official versions claim.

Orkhan Dzhemal, Alexander Rastorguyev and Kirill Radchenko were shot and [killed](#) in late July while investigating the activities of Wagner, a Russian private military contractor also tied to the conflicts in Syria and Ukraine. Russia's Foreign Ministry has said the three men were killed while resisting a robbery attempt.

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The report into the journalists' deaths, a [summary](#) of which was published by the opposition-leaning Dozhd TV on Thursday, was conducted by the Dossier group. Dossier is led by exiled former tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who had funded the journalists' work on Wagner in

CAR.

Wagner is reportedly under the control of Yevgeny Prigozhin, who is widely known as “Putin’s chef” because of his catering work for the Kremlin, and is believed to be behind the infamous troll farm in St. Petersburg.

Dozhd said Dossier’s investigation cited phone records to show that the journalists were being tailed by a CAR special forces officer who reportedly made 98 calls to a Russian security instructor with links to Wagner. He also maintained constant contact with the journalists’ driver.

That Russian security instructor made 100 calls to another Russian national also with links to the firm, the summary said. The summary also said that the journalists’ fixer was hired by an employee of another Prigozhin company, the Federal News Agency.

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“The journalists were under the control of people from Yevgeny Prigozhin's structures starting from the preparation stage,” The Daily Telegraph [cited](#) Dossier as saying Thursday.

The United States [indicted](#) Prigozhin last February for alleged meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. In March 2018, the U.S. Treasury [levied](#) sanctions on Prigozhin, his catering company and the internet troll farm.

During Thursday’s briefing in London, the U.S.-funded RFE/RL news website [reported](#) that Dossier has called for an independent UN investigation into the journalists’ murders.

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