

Head of Russia's Ingushetia Resigns Following Months of Border Deal Unrest

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Yunus-Bek Yevkurov **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

The head of Russia's smallest region has resigned following months of controversy over a land-swap deal with the neighboring republic of Chechnya, Russian media have reported.

Residents of the North Caucasus republic of Ingushetia first took to the streets against the border-swap agreement signed with Chechnya in fall 2018. Violent protests reignited in March as thousands of Ingush residents demanded the resignation of governor Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, who signed the agreement with Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

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In a televised statement on Monday, Yevkurov pointed to the fractures between the republic's government and its people as the reason for his resignation.

"Let's have the courage to say that all of us — the power that I represent, [as well as] public, religious and other institutions — are responsible for this, that we are divided today," Yevkurov said.

"Each of us has a choice — personal interests or the interests of our own republic," the state-run TASS news agency [quoted](#) him as saying. "Everything [has been in accordance] with my upbringing, my ideals and my ideas about the statehood of our republic. I urge all interested parties to make a choice — I made my choice."

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Estimates have [shown](#) that Ingushetia gave up 26 times more territory than Chechnya in the border-swap deal.

Yevkurov has been the head of Ingushetia since 2008.

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