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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian LGBT Activist Killed After Being Listed on 'Saw'-Inspired Gay Hunting Site

July 23, 2019

Yelena Grigoryeva **Dinar Idrisov / Facebook**

A prominent Russian LGBT activist who had been featured on a blocked website that encourages people to "hunt down" sexual minorities has been killed in St. Petersburg.

The website, inspired by the "Saw" horror film franchise and which encourages visitors to track down and assault people believed to be LGBT, was blocked in Russia last week.

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Yelena Grigoriyeva was found with multiple stab wounds and signs of strangulation near her home over the weekend, fellow activists said on social media.

The activist had regularly received death threats and reported them to the police, who did

nothing to protect her before she was murdered, fellow activist Dinar Idrisov wrote on Facebook on Monday.

“A reminder: Yelena was listed on the homophobic ‘Saw’ website which has long threatened LGBT activists across the country,” photojournalist Georgy Markov wrote.

Grigoriyeva had been stabbed at least eight times, the St. Petersburg Fontanka.ru news website reported.

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On Thursday, Russia's Investigative Committee said it had detained a 38-year-old native of Kyrgyzstan as the main suspect in Grigoriyeva's killing. Investigators said they had evidence to prove that her death was the result of a domestic dispute and that she had been familiar with the suspect.

Grigoriyeva had maintained an active stance on a range of issues, according to the Mediazona news website. It reported that over the past year she had been detained at rallies against torture and the Chechen-Ingush land swap, as well as at LGBT protests.

Rights activists say violent homophobic attacks have become more frequent since Russia banned “homosexual propaganda” toward minors in 2013. Recent polling suggested that Russian attitudes toward equal rights for LGBT people were at a 14-year high.

This story was updated on July 25, 2019, to add details about the detained suspect from the Investigative Committee's statement.

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