

'Top 100 Influential Russian Muslims' Ranking Released by Local Media

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President Vladimir Putin meeting Muslim leaders in Kazan in January 2018. Kremlin.ru

A Russian media outlet has for the first time compiled a ranking of the country's 100 most influential Muslims, with UFC lightweight champion Khabib Nurmagomedov featured alongside tycoons, government officials and spiritual leaders.

An estimated 20 million Muslims make up Russia's second-largest religious minority, comprising about 14% of the overall population. Seven of Russia's 85 federal subjects have Muslim-majority populations, including Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and five North Caucasus republics.

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Russia's grand mufti, or Muslim spiritual leader, Ravil Gainutdin topped the inaugural ranking of influential Muslims [published](#) by the Tatarstan-based Business Online news website Sunday.

Mintimer Shaimiyev, Tatarstan's first leader after the Soviet collapse, placed second, ahead of Dagestan's Nurmagomedov. Tatarstan's current leader Rustam Minnikhanov and Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov closed out the top-5.

"Russian Islam is a giant, multicolored but extremely fragmented community not fully aware of itself. For outsiders, it's quite a black box," Business Online wrote Sunday in the ranking titled "On the Path of Allah: Top 100 Influential Muslims in Russia."

Billionaires Alisher Usmanov and Suleiman Kerimov, the latter accused of tax fraud by French authorities, placed sixth and eighth, while Moscow's deputy mayor in charge of urban development Marat Khusnullin ranked ninth.

The new index compiled by Business Online, published on the religious holiday of Kurban Bairam, or Eid al-Adha, was based on expert surveys.

The news outlet said that its rating includes public figures "who don't publicly demonstrate their religiosity, but influence the Muslim community, lobby on its behalf or are considered its pride."

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