

Russian Arrested in Chechen-Georgian's Reported Assassination in Germany

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Paul Zinken / dpa / TASS

German authorities have arrested a Russian suspect on suspicion of killing a Georgian national over his alleged involvement in the second Chechen war in what is being reported as a contract killing by foreign intelligence.

Officials said an unnamed 40-year-old Georgian national was [shot dead](#) by a cyclist in a Berlin park on Friday afternoon. A 49-year-old suspect, also unnamed, was [arrested](#) shortly after near the crime scene.

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The slain victim was Zelimkhan Khangoshvili, an ethnic Chechen born in Georgia, the republic of Chechnya's Vayfond human rights organization [announced](#) over the weekend.

German media [reported](#) that Khangoshvili fought in the second Chechen war of 1999–2009

and was fighting a deportation order to keep his asylum claim alive.

He served as a field commander in 2001–2005, Georgia's Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center group [said](#). He had fought on the side of the Chechen resistance against Russian and Chechen government forces, Vayfond said.

Investigators are looking at his death as a "professionally planned and executed contract killing" by a foreign intelligence service, Germany's Der Spiegel news website [cited](#) unnamed sources in the security services as saying.

On Aug. 29, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#) that the suspect has been identified as Vadim Sergeyevich, a native of Siberia, but withheld his last name. The man was likely carrying fake documents to conceal his identity, Kommersant cited acquaintances of Khangoshvili as saying.

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Vayfond compared Khangoshvili's death to the 2010 [murder](#) of Chechen refugee Umar Israilov in Austria.

"Khangoshvili may be the latest victim of [Chechen leader Ramzan] Kadyrov's killers in Europe," the organization said.

Khangoshvili had reportedly [survived](#) an apparent assassination attempt in Georgia in 2015.

Russia's diplomatic mission in Germany has not yet commented on the suspect's arrest.

Russia fought two wars against separatists in the majority Muslim republic of Chechnya in 1994–1996 and 1999–2009.

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