The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Chechen Dissident Blogger Survives Assassination Attempt in Europe

February 27, 2020



Tumso Abdurakhmanov's YouTube channel, where he regularly criticizes Chechen officials including the Russian republic's longtime leader Ramzan Kadyrov, has more than a quarter-million subscribers.
Youtube

A popular Chechen opposition blogger has been hospitalized after an assassination attempt in Europe, the Chechen human rights group Vayfond and multiple news outlets reported Thursday.

Tumso Abdurakhmanov fled Russia in 2015 and has attempted, so far unsuccessfully, to gain political asylum in Poland. His YouTube channel where he regularly criticizes Chechen officials, including the Russian republic's longtime leader Ramzan Kadyrov, has more than a quarter-million subscribers.

Related article: Chechen Dissident Killed in France Amid Series of High-Profile Murders Abroad

A widely shared video of what appears to be Abdurakhmanov's Instagram story shows the disheveled blogger filming his would-be assassin lying head-down on a blood-stained floor. In the ensuing exchange, the assailant, who identifies himself as Ruslan, says a man from the Chechen capital of Grozny had ordered him to travel from Moscow to "scare" Abdurakhmanov.

"You came with this hammer to scare me?" Abdurakhmanov, breathing heavily after apparently disarming Ruslan, asked as he showed the alleged weapon on camera.

The Guardian reported that the assassination attempt took place in Poland.

The Kremlin on Thursday said it's "not inclined to draw parallels" between the attack and Abdurakhmanov's criticism of Kadyrov.

Kadyrov's close ally Magomed Daudov declared a so-called "blood feud" against Abdurakhmanov in March 2019 for calling his father and former Chechen leader Akhmat Kadyrov a traitor. Observers noted that the assassination attempt took place on Daudov's 40th birthday.

Earlier this month, Abdurakhmanov claimed that a fellow Chechen native with alleged high-level ties had killed another opposition blogger Imran Aliyev in France.

Aliyev's stabbing death and the attempt on Abdurakhmanov's life are the latest in a series of what are believed to be politically motivated murders of ethnic Chechens outside Russia. An ethnic Chechen of Georgian citizenship was shot and killed in Germany last summer, a broad-daylight murder that investigative reporters blamed on Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB).

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/02/27/chechen-dissident-blogger-survives-assassination-attempt-in-europe-a69431