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Russian MMA Star Khabib Urges 'Discipline' Amid Dagestan Virus Outbreak

By AFP

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The coronavirus situation in Nurmagomedov's home region has been described as a "catastrophe" by officials. **Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency**

Russian Mixed Martial Arts fighter Khabib Nurmagomedov has appealed to residents of his native Dagestan to follow containment rules as his father was put on a ventilator after catching the novel coronavirus.

The undefeated UFC lightweight champion took to Instagram late Monday to urge people in the southern Russian region to be "disciplined" and to "listen to our doctors" during the epidemic.

Related article: Putin Intervenes as Russia's Dagestan Faces Virus 'Catastrophe'

Nurmagomedov enjoys celebrity status in Dagestan, where the coronavirus situation has been described as a "catastrophe" by officials, forcing President Vladimir Putin to intervene.

The government promised to send additional equipment to the region, where over 600 people died of "pneumonia," according to health officials.

The 31-year-old told his 20 million followers in a video that doctors are "pleading" for people to stay at home, even as the majority-Muslim region gears up to celebrate the end of Ramadan this weekend.

Embed:



View this post on Instagram



A post shared by Khabib Nurmagomedov (@khabib_nurmagomedov) on May 18, 2020 at 11:53am

"It's a very difficult situation. I personally have over 20 relatives... who were in intensive care. Many of them are not with us anymore. Many of my acquaintances are dead," Nurmagomedov said.

His own father was in "very serious condition."

"On top of this virus he started having heart problems," he added.

News agencies reported Monday that his father, Abdulmanap Nurmagomedov, who trained his son from an early age, was put on a ventilator in a hospital in Moscow.

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