

Kadyrov Accused of Masterminding Murder Plot Against Georgian TV Host Who Insulted Putin

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Georgi Gabunia **Mtavari TV**

Update: Kadyrov [denied](#) ordering Gabunia's killing, saying "trust me, if someone acts on my orders, they will fulfill it" on his Telegram channel late Tuesday.

"And if the task is to be performed quietly, then no one — especially those in your deeply stagnating countries — will find out about it," he wrote. Kadyrov added that "we haven't forgotten how [Gabunia] insulted our state, our people and therefore me personally."

Georgia has arrested a Russian national suspected of being hired to kill a journalist who insulted President Vladimir Putin live on air, with the would-be victim's boss claiming that Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov ordered the killing.

Television host Giorgi Gabunia ignited backlash last summer when he opened his broadcast with a minute of [graphic vulgarity](#) aimed at Putin and his deceased mother. Officials in both

Georgia and Russia, which have had a tense relationship since fighting a brief war in 2008, condemned Gabunia's tirade.

Related article: [Georgian TV Host Ignites Backlash for On-Air Putin Insults](#)

Georgia's state security service [said](#) Monday that it had detained a Russian citizen as part of a criminal investigation into "preparation of murder by contract."

The suspect, identified by the initials V.B., has been charged with buying forged documents.

Georgia's security service said the arrest prevented a "graver crime."

Gabunia's boss Nika Gvaramia claimed that the suspect, whom he identified as ethnic Ingush Vasambeg Bokov, 37, was hired by Kadyrov.

"[Bokov] was planning to liquidate Giorgi Gabunia on the orders of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov," the Open Caucasus Media news website [quoted](#) Gvaramia as saying.

He added that the Georgian government learned of the alleged assassination plot from Ukrainian law enforcement.

"Our sources in the counterterrorism service said that it's directly related to Giorgi Gabunia's speech about Putin," Gvaramia [said](#) on an opposition-leaning news channel which he had set up after being ousted from the independent channel where Gabunia made his anti-Putin diatribe.

At the height of the scandal, Kadyrov had [warned](#) that "Gabunia should be hidden behind seven fences for the first to cross his path could do with him what he deserves."

The Chechen leader has not yet responded to the allegations.

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