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Russian Millionaire Lawmaker Says 'Accidentally' Shot Man He Mistook for Bear

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Igor Redkin, a fishing and aviation magnate, is ranked as the country's 20th richest public official with a net worth of 715.7 million rubles ($9.7 million). **kamchatka.er.ru**

A millionaire lawmaker from Russia's Far East has said he "accidentally" shot dead a man he mistook for a bear that had been terrorizing the local community.

Igor Redkin, a local assembly deputy in the Kamchatka region, turned himself in to the police on Tuesday after the incident.

"A tragedy occurred on Aug. 2 in which I, Igor Vladimirovich Redkin, became an unwitting participant," Redkin said in a statement to the local Kam24.ru news website.

"In the evening, I learned that a bear was wandering around a landfill in the village of Ozernovsky and was threatening local residents," he said.

"I took a gun and decided to scare it away. I shot at the bear at dusk. I later learned that a local

resident was wounded in the area around the same time and died in the hospital."

Kam24.ru identified the victim as 30-year-old Andrei Tolstopyatov.

The lawmaker said he has suspended his membership in Russia's ruling political party United Russia and withdrawn his re-election campaign to the Kamchatka assembly in next month's vote.

Some locals dispute Redkin's account, with Kam24.ru reporting that he may have been engaged in reckless shooting while drunk.

A court in the Kamchatka region 6,500 kilometers east of Moscow placed Redkin under house arrest pending a murder investigation, state media reported Wednesday.

The remote peninsula is famed for its population of 20,000 brown bears, who regularly come into contact with humans.

Forbes Russia has ranked Redkin, a fishing and aviation magnate, as the country's 20th richest public official with a net worth of 715.7 million rubles ($9.7 million).

Kam24.ru, citing unnamed sources, reported that Redkin could face lesser charges of involuntary slaughter that are punishable by a maximum prison sentence of 2 years.

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