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Student Makes Public Apology for 'Devil Putin' Anti-War Cry

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Zukhra Albekova. **t.me/dagizvestiya**

A Russian high schooler filmed shouting anti-war slogans has issued an on-camera apology that some speculate may have been forced, local media reported Sunday.

In a widely shared video, schoolgirl Zukhra Alibekova can be seen shouting "No to war! Freedom to Ukraine! [Russian President Vladimir] Putin is the devil!" at a graduation celebration to a smattering of applause.

But a clip posted to social media Sunday by pro-Kremlin accounts in Russia's republic of Dagestan shows the student and her mother publicly apologizing for the outburst.

"I'm very sorry for my actions," Alibekova said in the video, standing in front of the entrance to School No. 11 in the coastal town of Izberbash on the Caspian Sea. "I just wanted to attract attention to myself."

Her mother, Rashida Alibekova, blamed "stress over upcoming exams and domestic

problems" for her daughter's anti-war remarks.

"I fully support the president's course of action. I'm a patriot and therefore support the special operation in Ukraine," she said.

"I'm very sorry that I overlooked something important in my daughter's upbringing."

According to Kavkaz.Realii, the North Caucasus affiliate of the U.S.-funded RFE/RL news outlet, local officials forced the Alibekovs to issue the apologies.

The region's governor reportedly called Izberbash's mayor, "demanding that he handle the situation," Kavkaz.Realii wrote, citing unnamed sources.

An unnamed regional official told the outlet that local authorities had also pressed unspecified misdemeanor charges against the family. Pro-Kremlin social media claimed that Zukhra Alibekova was charged with "discrediting" the Russian military, while her mother was reportedly accused of "overlooking [her] parental responsibilities."

Izberbash City Hall as well as Dagestan's Education Ministry and Interior Ministry declined to comment.

The North Caucasus republic of Dagestan has accumulated the country's highest number of officially confirmed casualties since Moscow invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

Meanwhile, 40 Russian citizens are being charged with "discrediting" the country's military each day, says human rights lawyer Pavel Chikov, with more than 2,000 cases opened in less than three months.

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