The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Graphic Footage Appears to Show Russian Fighter Castrating Ukrainian Prisoner of War

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Still from the video

Footage that emerged on social media late Thursday appears to show a Ukrainian prisoner of war being castrated by Russian fighters, igniting shock and outrage in Ukraine.

The Moscow Times is unable to independently verify the authenticity of the video.

The minute-and-a-half-long video, which The Moscow Times has chosen not to republish, shows what appears to be a group of Russian soldiers or mercenaries using a utility knife to castrate the victim, who wears the fatigues of a Ukrainian soldier and is bound and gagged.

The men can be heard shouting degrading insults at the victim as they pin him down.

It is unclear what eventually happened to the victim in the video.

Nor was it possible to determine exactly when or where the footage was taken.

Aric Toler, head of research and training at investigative outlet Bellingcat, told The Times that the video is likely authentic.

Toler said a Russian soldier wearing the same distinctive black hat and wristband as the man in the video had previously appeared in a clip at the Azot chemicals plant in the eastern city of Sievierodonetsk aired by the Kremlin-backed RT broadcaster.

Some observers claimed the man is a part of the Chechen Akhmat Battalion that is shown in a clip published by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency, while others alleged he was from Russia's republic of Kalmykia.

The Geolitics Twitter account located the video to Sievierodonetsk — which suggests the footage could be weeks old, since fighting has largely subsided since Russia captured the city in late June.

Pro-Ukrainian Telegram channels claimed the victim was killed, with his dead body tied up and dragged through the dirt.

Some pro-Kremlin figures dismissed the castration video as fake, claiming that Ukrainian forces "were given a command to execute" Russian prisoners of war and "there are enough facts of torture and castrations of Russian servicemen."

The video has sparked horror within Ukraine, with officials in Kyiv vowing to punish the perpetrators.

"All the world needs to understand: Russia is a country of cannibals who enjoy torture and murder. But the fog of war will not help to avoid the punishment of the executioners. We identify everyone. We will get everyone," Ukrainian presidential adviser Mikhailo Podolyak tweeted.

Russian officials have not yet commented on the footage.

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