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Russian State Media Journalist Killed in Crimea Shooting Range Accident

By AFP

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Svetlana Babayeva **vk.com / Novosti Simferopolya**

A veteran Russian state media journalist has been killed in an accident on a shooting range in Moscow-annexed Crimea, Russia's main Rossiya Segodnya state media group has said.

Svetlana Babayeva, the head of the Kremlin-backed media's Crimea bureau, "died due to an accident" while practicing shooting on Friday, Russian agencies quoted the media outlet as saying.

The 50-year-old had throughout her long career with pro-Kremlin media also been posted to the United Kingdom and the United States.

Dmitry Kiselyov, the head of the Rossiya Segodnya group and one of Russia's main state television presenters, told Russian media that Babayeva would be "greatly missed."

He said she was the "warmest person, strongly rooting for Russia" and that she had "wanted

to support our heroes."

"Restless Sveta was a professional of the highest standards with a bright journalistic biography," he added, using her nickname.

The Kremlin also expressed sorrow at her loss, saying it was "hard to believe" she had died and that we would be "greatly missed."

Its spokesman Dmitry Peskov called her a "multi-talented journalist" and an "unusually charming woman."

He praised Babayeva, who was once part of a presidential pool of journalists and with whom he said the Kremlin had worked "for many, many years."

Born in Moscow in 1972, Babayeva's long career with pro-Kremlin media included a senior role at the main Izvestia newspaper and postings in the United Kingdom and the United States for the RIA Novosti news agency.

She began working at Rossiya Segodnya after a controversial state overhaul of the media, and had been its representative in the Crimean city of Simferopol since 2019.

Russian authorities in occupied southern Ukraine also mourned her loss, with a Moscow-installed official in the city of Kherson praising her reporting of "true information" from the occupied territories.

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