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Fugitive Russian Mayor Turns Up in Ukraine Combat Zone – Kommersant

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Mayor of Bolshoi Kamen Rustam Abushaev. **Bolshoi Kamen city website**

A Russian mayor wanted on fraud charges has surfaced fighting in the Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine, the Kommersant newspaper reported Monday.

The Russian authorities accuse Rustyam Abushayev, who headed two municipalities in Far Eastern Russia's Primorye region, of making fraudulent land deals and conducting business illegally.

On Monday, Abushayev posted a video of himself in combat uniform with a sniper rifle in an unknown location in front of a destroyed private house.

"I decided to come here long ago, but felt the urgent need while congratulating the families of dead soldiers ahead of March 8 [International Women's Day]," he said.

"I understood that I had to come without delay and defend our motherland's interests," Abushayev said.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which the Kremlin officially calls a “special military operation,” is entering its 14th month.

According to Kommersant, Russian investigators put Abushayev on the federal wanted list in March.

The Investigative Committee’s regional branch told Kommersant that Abushayev is still on Russia’s wanted list in connection with the fraud and illegal entrepreneurship cases.

Abushayev made no mention of the criminal case against him in the video.

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