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Kadyrov Says Close Ally Delimkhanov Alive, Denies Injury Reports

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State Duma deputy Adam Delimkhanov with Belgorod region Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov. **Ramzan Kadyrov / VK**

Updated with Kremlin's comments and Kadyrov's denial.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov denied media reports Wednesday claiming one of his close allies had been wounded in Ukraine.

"Thanks to everyone who was worried! Adam [Delimkhanov] is alive and well and not even injured," Kadyrov said on the Telegram messaging app.

Earlier, the Russian Defense Ministry-run Zvezda TV channel reported Delimkhanov, a Russian lawmaker from Chechnya, had been wounded in Ukraine, but without providing further details.

Kadyrov initially said he was unable to reach Delimkhanov.

“I ask Ukrainian intelligence to provide information on exactly what place and what positions

were struck so that I can still find my dear brother," Kadyrov had said on his Telegram channel, promising a "generous reward" for this information.

In his update later Wednesday, the Chechen leader claimed his request to Ukraine intelligence was a ploy to "demonstrate... to what extent [Ukrainian] media has sunk," but did not offer further clarification.

State Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin had said that Delimkhanov was "alive and well" and "wishes us good health" without providing details of his injury, according to State Duma deputy Dmitry Kuznetsov.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin expressed "great concern" about the news.

"We are worried, like everyone else, for the Hero of Russia. We hope some updated information about what happened will appear in the very near future," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters Wednesday.

Earlier unconfirmed reports circulating in Ukrainian media said Delimkhanov had been killed in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region, which is partially occupied by Russian forces.

Delimkhanov, 53, was last year made a Hero of the Russian Federation for his role in fighting in the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol last spring.

Delimkhanov this month publicly criticized Russia's Wagner mercenary group, accusing its leader Yevgeny Prigozhin of becoming a "blogger who screams and shouts off to the whole world about all the problems" for highlighting problems in the Russian military.

He initially gained military experience fighting against Moscow in the Chechen separatist wars of the 1990s. He and Kadyrov switched sides during the Second Chechen War to align with Russia.

In the years since, Delimkhanov has become one of Chechnya's leading politicians. He has been a deputy in Russia's lower house of parliament since 2007.

Delimkhanov is under United States and European Union sanctions.

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