

Russian Journalist, Lawyer Beaten and Hospitalized in Chechnya

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Yelena Milashina and lawyer Alexander Nemov. **Babinets Sergey / Telegram**

A prominent Russian journalist and lawyer have been hospitalized after being badly beaten on a visit to Russia's republic of Chechnya, the rights groups Memorial and the Crew Against Torture (CAT) [said](#) early Tuesday.

Yelena Milashina and lawyer Alexander Nemov arrived in the Chechen capital of Grozny to attend the court hearing of the mother of a prominent Chechen activist when their car was reportedly blocked on the way from the airport.

An armed group kicked and threatened to shoot Milashina and Nemov, CAT [said](#), adding that the group also seized and destroyed the pair's personal electronic devices.

Memorial noted that the attackers had shaved Milashina's head and covered it in green dye.

Head of CAT Sergei Babinets later [published](#) a photo of the journalist, saying Milashina was talking over the phone with Russia's human rights commissioner Tatiana Moskalkova.

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“You’ve been warned. Get out of here and don’t write anything,” Memorial quoted the assailants as saying.

Milashina was hospitalized in Grozny with broken fingers, the rights groups said. Nemov was also hospitalized and had difficulty speaking and moving.

The two were later transferred to a hospital in Beslan, a city in the North Caucasus republic of North Ossetia, on the orders of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov after he spoke with Moskalkova by phone, CAT [said](#).

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that President Vladimir Putin was informed of the attack on Milashina and Nemov and called for “energetic measures” to be taken in response.

Later Tuesday, Kadyrov [said](#) he had “instructed the competent services to make every effort to identify the attackers.”

“The authorities started to work immediately after the incident was reported,” he wrote on his official Telegram channel.

Milashina, who has extensively covered Chechnya for the disbanded independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta, was previously [attacked](#) alongside another lawyer in Grozny in February 2020.

Kadyrov, who has ruled Chechnya with an iron fist since 2007, had blasted Novaya Gazeta reporters who investigated alleged disappearances in his region as “devils” in the run-up to the attack on Milashina.

Milashina is known for breaking the story of anti-gay purges in Chechnya, a conservative and predominantly Muslim region, in 2017.

Nemov represents Zarema Musaeva, who [faces](#) up to 5.5 years in prison on charges of fraud and assaulting the authorities.

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Musaeva is the wife of a retired federal judge and the mother of rights lawyer and activist Abubakar Yangulbaev.

In January 2022, she was violently detained and forcibly transported to Chechnya, where she had been deprived of access to the insulin she needs to manage her diabetes.

Her exiled son Yangulbaev and his brothers, Baysangur and Ibrahim, are vocal critics of Kadyrov.

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