The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Chechen Woman Who Fled Death Threats at Home Forcibly Returned to Family

August 30, 2023



Chechen Human Rights Ombudsman Mansur Soltayev and Seida Suleymanova. **t.me/chechombudsman**

A woman who had fled Chechnya following death threats from her family has been forcibly returned to her home, Chechnya's human rights commissioner said late Tuesday.

Seda Suleimanova fled the Muslim-majority region in October 2022 with the help of the human rights group SK SOS after her family warned that she could be killed in an "honor killing" for refusing to be married off to a man.

Police accompanied by Chechen nationals in plainclothes detained Suleimanova in St. Petersburg last Wednesday as part of a criminal case into alleged jewelry theft in Chechnya.

She was transferred to the republic of Chechnya, where she was interrogated as a witness and then handed over to her family, SK SOS said Friday.

Related article: Russian Journalist Vows to Continue Visiting Chechnya After Brutal Attack

Mansur Soltaev, Chechnya's human rights ombudsman, late Tuesday published a photograph of the 26-year-old Suleimanova sitting in a long dress and headscarf next to him.

"She feels good. Her rights are not being violated and she's not harassed," Soltaev said on the Telegram messaging app.

"I made sure during the conversation that she's not threatened by anything, she's safe," he continued, adding that he also spoke with Suleimanova's relatives.

Suleimanova's fiance Stanislav Kudryavtsev, who lived with her in St. Petersburg, told human rights group SK SOS that she looks "depressed" in the photograph, while also noting that she appeared to have a large bruise on her neck.

Chechnya's strongman leader Ramzan Kadyrov has sought to impose Islamic values in his conservative region despite Russia's status as a secular country. He is also accused by international rights groups of overseeing widespread human rights abuses.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/08/30/chechen-woman-who-fled-death-threats-at-home-forcibly-returned-to-family-a82294