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Chechen Court Reduces Sentence for Jailed Mother of Kadyrov Critic

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Zarema Musaeva. **Yelena Afonina/TASS**

A court in Russia's republic of Chechnya has reduced the prison sentence for the mother of prominent Chechen activist Abubakar Yangulbaev, a civil rights group said Tuesday.

Zarema Musaeva in July was sentenced to 5.5 years in prison on charges of assaulting the authorities and fraud. She denies the accusations.

Rights groups criticized Musaeva's conviction, describing it as retaliation for the activities of her three sons Abubakar, Baysangur and Ibragim Yangulbaev — who are all vocal critics of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

Chechnya's Supreme Court on Tuesday recognized Musaeva's chronic diseases as mitigating circumstances and ruled that she would now serve a reduced sentence of five years in prison, according to the rights group Crew Against Torture.

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Musaeva was also granted permission to serve her sentence in a prison settlement, a remote area where inmates are allowed to roam under the watch of guards, instead of the penal colony where she is currently held.

The Crew Against Torture said prosecutors had asked the court to reduce Musaeva's sentence due to her ailing health.

Abubakar Yangulabev and human rights groups repeatedly sounded the alarm about her deteriorating health as authorities denied Musaeva access to adequate medical care.

Musaeva was violently detained by Chechen law enforcement in January 2022 in the family's apartment in the city of Nizhny Novgorod, some 420 kilometers east of Moscow.

Chechen security officers had also attempted to detain Musaeva's husband, the retired federal judge Saydi Yangulbaev, but were unable to arrest him due to his judicial immunity.

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