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FSB Officers Kill Belarusian Activist Accused of Plotting 'Terrorist Attack' for Ukraine

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Mikalai Aliakseyeu. **Social media**

A Belarusian opposition activist was shot and killed by Federal Security Service (FSB) officers in northern Russia's republic of Karelia, media reported Thursday.

The FSB claimed that the unidentified Belarusian citizen born in 1974 was recruited by the Ukrainian special services to carry out a terrorist attack in the city of Olonets, Interfax cited the law enforcement agency's press service as saying.

The man was a member of the Kastus Kalinouski Regiment, a Belarusian volunteer unit in the Ukrainian army, the FSB said.

He allegedly opened fire at security officers during his arrest and "was neutralized" during the ensuing clash, the FSB said.

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The Astra Telegram news channel identified the deceased Belarusian citizen as activist Mikalai Aliakseyeu, 49.

Aliakseyeu, a critic of longtime Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, took part in Belarus's 2020 mass protests against Lukashenko's disputed election victory, Astra reported.

According to Astra, Aliakseyeu was killed in Karelia's Olonetsky district on Wednesday, the same day that a criminal case was opened against him for preparing a terrorist attack.

One of Aliakseyeu's sons confirmed to the independent Belarusian news outlet Nasha Niva that his father was killed.

The son said his mother visited the morgue in Karelia where Aliakseyeu's body is being held and FSB officers confiscated her phone.

"Dad was a wonderful person. He wasn't capable of shooting someone. He was a deeply religious man and prayed constantly. We went to church with him," the activist's son told Nasha Niva.

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Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya shared condolences over the "tragic news" of Aliakseyeu's killing.

"Belarusian activist & father of four, Mikalai Alekseyeu, was killed by the Russian FSB. He took part in the 2020 protests against the #Belarus regime & opposed Russian aggression in Ukraine. Sending my deepest condolences to his family & loved ones," Tsikhanouskaya wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

The circumstances of Aliakseyeu's stay in Russia are unclear.

The independent Mediazona Belarus news website reported that Aliakseyeu has been on Russia's federal wanted list for unspecified criminal charges since at least November 2022.

Belarus, Russia's neighbor and close ally, has carried out a sweeping crackdown on dissenters since the 2020 protests.

The two countries share an interstate wanted list.

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