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Kadyrov Declares 'Blood Feud' Against Russian Lawmakers in First Remarks on Wildberries Shootout

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov. **Ramzan Kadyrov / VK**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has declared a "blood feud" against three federal lawmakers from neighboring North Caucasus republics in his first comments on last month's deadly shooting outside the Moscow headquarters of Russia's largest online retailer Wildberries.

Kadyrov has vowed to help Vladislav Bakalchuk, the estranged husband of Wildberries CEO Tatiana Kim — Russia's wealthiest woman — to return his wife and block the merger of their e-commerce giant with the smaller outdoor advertising group Russ.

The family and business dispute escalated last month when Bakalchuk led a group of men to Wildberries' Moscow offices and allegedly tried to force their way into the building. Two security guards, who were ethnic Ingush, were killed in the shootout and multiple felony charges, including murder, were filed against Bakalchuk and several other ethnic Chechens involved in the incident.

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According to the independent North Caucasus news outlet Fortanga, Kadyrov claimed that Russian Senator Suleiman Kerimov and lower-house State Duma deputies Bekhan Barakhoyev and Rizvan Kurbanov had "seized" Wildberries from Kim and ordered his assassination.

"I officially declare a blood feud against Bekhan Barakhoyev, Suleiman Kerimov and Rizvan Kurbanov," Kadyrov said at a meeting with senior officials, according to Fortanga's translation from Chechen.

The three lawmakers are originally from Dagestan and Ingushetia, two Russian republics that neighbor Chechnya.

Kadyrov struck a less aggressive tone in a Russian-language post accompanying the video, saying only that he resented attempts to "pit entire nations against each other on domestic disputes."

Russian business outlets characterize the Wildberries-Russ merger into the new company RVB as an undercover dispute between Kadyrov and the influential billionaire senator Kerimov.

The merger may also be part of Russia's wartime redistribution of business assets that has benefited business figures linked to the Kremlin.

Wildberries and Russ have secured President Vladimir Putin's approval and say the merger will create a new financial, media and retail behemoth that could rival Western technology giants and boost Russia's economy.

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