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RT Chief Simonyan Says Husband in Coma After Undergoing 'Clinical Death'

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Tigran Keosayan and Margarita Simonyan. **Vladimir Smirnov / TASS**

Pro-Kremlin TV personality Tigran Keosayan was hospitalized in a coma after undergoing clinical death, his wife Margarita Simonyan, who heads the state-funded broadcaster RT, said Wednesday.

"My husband, Tigran Keosayan, survived clinical death and is in a coma," Simonyan wrote in a late-night Telegram message, saying he has a "long-standing heart condition."

Clinical death happens when a person's heart stops pumping blood through the body and it is paired with a loss of breathing. Without immediate medical intervention, reversing the condition becomes impossible and legal death is declared.

Keosayan was hospitalized in late December in "highly critical" condition, according to Baza, a Telegram channel with purported links to Russian law enforcement. He suffered heart attacks in 2008 and 2010.

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Keosayan, 59, is a Russian actor and director of Armenian descent who began hosting a pro-Kremlin satirical comedy show in 2016. He sparked controversy in 2020 for featuring an impersonation of former U.S. President Barack Obama in blackface.

In 2018, Keosayan directed a patriotic romantic comedy about the Russian-built bridge in Crimea, which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. The movie received poor reviews and was among the lowest-rated on film review websites.

The European Union and the United Kingdom imposed sanctions on Keosayan after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Since the full-scale invasion, Keosayan's comments have sparked controversies among Russia's traditional allies Kazakhstan and Armenia.

"Those who love Tigran, I dare ask you to pray for him," Simonyan wrote on Telegram.

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