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Russian Police Suspend Investigation Into Attack on Journalist in Chechnya

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Journalist Yelena Milashina after the attack. **babinetssergey / Telegram**

Russian law enforcement authorities have suspended a criminal investigation into the violent assault on award-winning journalist Yelena Milashina and lawyer Alexander Nemov in Chechnya, media reported Friday.

Milashina and Nemov were held at gunpoint and severely beaten by masked men in July 2023 after arriving in the region to attend a court hearing for the mother of exiled Chechen opposition activists.

Milashina was hospitalized with serious injuries, including head trauma, after being struck with metal pipes. Her attackers also shaved her head and doused her with green dye. Nemov was stabbed in the leg.

Russia's Investigative Committee, which handles major crimes, initially launched a probe into the assault. However, according to a letter sent to Milashina and published by the media outlet NewsNN, the investigation was suspended because authorities claimed they could not identify

the suspects. A photo of the letter, dated Dec. 25, 2024, was included in the report.

“I think it’s obvious no one’s been trying to find anyone,” Nemov told NewsNN.

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Russian law enforcement officials are often reluctant to investigate human rights abuses in the republic of Chechnya, where Milashina reported extensively for the independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has repeatedly threatened Milashina and Novaya Gazeta, particularly following the forced detention of his critics’ mother, Zarema Musaeva.

Musaeva is serving a five-year prison sentence on fraud and assault charges, which her supporters say are politically motivated. She was due for release on March 23, but a court extended her detention until March 26 as part of new charges related to disrupting prison operations.

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