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Defying Kadyrov, Moscow Court Jails Chechen Teenager Over Street Fights

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chechnyatoday.com

A Moscow court has sentenced a 14-year-old Chechen boy to nearly two years in a penal colony after finding him guilty of attacking passersby in the Russian capital, the Kommersant business daily reported.

Muslim Mudiev's sentencing comes after Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov lashed out at Investigative Committee chief Alexander Bastrykin and Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev over the case, warning that "the Almighty will punish them."

Kadyrov also pledged to secure Murdiev's release and claimed his detention was part of a broader pattern of treatment of ethnic minorities and migrants from former Soviet republics.

Moscow's Savyolovsky District Court on Monday convicted Murdiev of five assaults carried out with a group of other teenagers in the city's Khodynskoye Polye district.

Four other defendants were handed terms ranging from one year and 11 months to 3.5 years.

Prosecutors sought a two-year sentence for Murdiev under charges of hooliganism committed by a group acting in collusion, which carries a maximum sentence of seven years.

Chechnya's human rights commissioner Mansur Soltaev had urged the court to impose non-custodial punishments, arguing that the boys were "children" still capable of change.

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Investigators said Murdiev and his friends picked fights with passersby, filmed the clashes and posted the videos online to showcase their "exploits."

Murdiev, who had been under house arrest since October 2023, has denied the accusations, saying he had been sticking up for a friend who was being attacked in a park.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to comment on Kadyrov's December 2024 criticism of Bastrykin and Kolokoltsev.

The Investigative Committee later released video evidence of Murdiev's alleged involvement and said it stood by the case. Following Kadyrov's criticism, prosecutors sent the file back for review.

Murdiev's lawyer Aslanbek Minkailov said he hoped prosecutors would take a "sensible" approach and recognize his client's innocence.

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