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Criminal Investigation Opened in Rape Allegations Against Relatives of Woman Who Says She Fled Abuse in Ingushetia

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Aina Mankiyeva. **@marem_group / Telegram**

Investigators in the republic of Ingushetia on Thursday launched a criminal investigation into rape allegations against the relatives of a young woman who said she fled abuse at her family home in the North Caucasus region last year.

Aina Mankiyeva, 21, was detained at a Moscow hostel on Wednesday and spent the night at a police station after her mother accused her of stealing 20,000 rubles ($250), according to the North Caucasus SOS Crisis Group (NC SOS), which assists women and LGBTQ+ people facing violence.

She was released the following day following a public outcry over her detention.

NC SOS said Mankiyeva, who is visually impaired, fled her family home in Ingushetia with the help of volunteers in April 2025. The news outlet Ostorozhno Media quoted one of

Mankiyeva's friends as saying, "If she goes back, she will be killed."

While in police custody, Mankiyeva submitted a statement requesting state protection and asked law enforcement authorities to launch an investigation into her relatives, who she accused of rape and beatings, according to the human rights group Marem.

"I was repeatedly raped, my life was put in danger and I was unlawfully deprived of my liberty," Mankiyeva's statement reads. "I also wish to report a knowingly false accusation by my mother regarding the alleged theft."

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Eva Merkacheva, a member of Russia's Human Rights Council, urged police to investigate Mankiyeva's relatives over the allegations and drop the theft charges.

"I understand that Moscow police intend to hand the young woman over to Ingush law enforcement," she wrote on Telegram. "In that case, savagery and violence will have won over civilization and the rule of law."

After her release, Ostorozhno Media wrote that Mankiyeva, accompanied by her lawyer, was taken to a safe location. Marem said the public outcry helped secure Mankiyeva's release, but noted that she still faces theft charges.

Later on Thursday, the Ingushetia regional branch of the Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body, announced that it had launched a criminal probe into the "illegal actions by [Mankiyeva's] relatives."

"Investigators and forensic investigators are carrying out the necessary investigative actions aimed at establishing all the circumstances of the crime," the law enforcement body said in a statement.

According to the exiled news outlet IStories, her father, Khambor Mankiyev, is a well-known artist in the republic of Ingushetia and was given a four-year suspended prison sentence in 2012 for trying to sell one of his children.

In comments to Ostorozhno Media, Mankiyev denied ever beating his daughter. He claimed he did not know why Mankiyeva left home but said he was working with law enforcement authorities to return her to Ingushetia.

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The episode is the latest in a string of cases involving young women who have fled abusive relatives in the majority-Muslim regions of Russia's North Caucasus. So-called "honor killings" are widespread throughout the region, especially in the republic of Chechnya, which neighbors Ingushetia.

Rights advocates estimate that at least several dozen women have been killed in cases

resembling honor killings between 2012 and 2017, with additional suspected cases since, including the alleged murder of Seda Suleimanova.

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