

Journalist From Opposition Paper Brutally Beaten

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Novaya Gazeta journalist Yelena Milashina was brutally beaten near her home on the outskirts of Moscow just after midnight early Thursday, the journalist said on Facebook.

Milashina says she and a female friend were attacked by two men who took her money and the friend's laptop. She says the attackers beat her brutally all over her body, including her face and head, knocking out teeth.

Milashina, who was also attacked in Beslan in 2006, is editor of Novaya Gazeta's special reports section and has published materials about disappearances and torture in the North Caucasus, as well as violations by law enforcement and security agencies.

The newspaper's deputy editor Nugzar Mikeladze told RIA-Novosti that he wasn't aware of a connection between the attack and Milashina's work.

"According to my information, there were no traces of a professional," he said.

The attackers were scared away by three girls passing by. Milashina called the police, who she

said summoned her back to the scene of the attack after arriving there only an hour later. She said the officers were questioning one of the witnesses and ignored her without opening the door. Milashina went home without giving her report.

A police source told RIA-Novosti that law enforcement received an emergency call from a woman who identified herself as Novaya Gazeta journalist Elena Milashina, but she was gone when police arrived and her phone was turned off. They said police had a record of the complaint and that it would be addressed.

Novaya Gazeta is known for highly critical coverage of the authorities. Several of the paper's journalist have been killed in past years, including Anna Politkovskaya, who exposed atrocities against civilians by Chechnya's Moscow-backed authorities. International media watchdogs rank Russia among the world's most dangerous countries for reporters, and most attacks on journalists have remained unsolved, including Politkovskaya's 2006 slaying.

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