

Kadyrov Urges Shaman Crackdown

By [The Moscow Times](#)

February 11, 2013

The  **Moscow Times**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has urged police, city authorities and clergymen to crack down on dubious folk healers and shamans, calling them a "great threat to our society."

"These charlatans prey on people's troubles and suffering. Nothing will stop them in their quest for self-enrichment," he said at a meeting attended by the heads of municipalities, clergy members, as well as self-declared shamans.

"They promise to cure diseases without having any knowledge or skills. And, unfortunately, people in search of relief fall for such scams," he said, according to a [statement](#) posted on his official website Monday.

One folk healer at the meeting claimed that he could cure cerebral palsy with a bottle opener. Another offered contact with spirits to solve "matters of the heart," the statement said.

Kadyrov said that many people who seek shamans' help are actually severely ill and in need of medical help. The folk healers are indirectly causing their deaths by not sending them to a

doctor, he said.

"We have repeatedly raised this issue and are taking specific measures, but the problem is still relevant. ... We must eradicate charlatanism in Chechnya," he said. "People need to know that turning to magicians and false healers does not bring relief and is forbidden in Islam."

The statement did not specify what measures were to be taken.

It also did not specify whether Grozny's Center for Islamic Medicine — opened in 2008 with state support and, according to the Southern Federal District's website, still in operation — would fall under the category of "charlatanism" for what its founder, Daud Selmurzayev, describes in an October 2012 [interview](#) with Smartnews.ru as "the use of the Quran to help drive out demons."

The center, which treats psycho-neurological diseases with the use of prayers from the Quran, gets many patients who have been "swindled by practitioners of both black and white magic," Selmurzayev told the news agency.

The official website for the Chechen government carries a [statement](#) from November 2010 announcing a meeting held between Selmurzayev and Kadyrov, in which the Chechen leader praises the center for its important work and assures that the center's new state-sponsored building would meet all technical requirements.

According to that statement, the center had treated 130,000 patients since its opening two years earlier.

Original url: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/02/11/kadyrov-urges-shaman-crackdown-a21427>