

# Chechen Investigators Probe Suspected Honor Killing in Grozny

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Chechen leader Kadyrov openly expressed support for the practice in 2009 when he told reporters that a handful of victims of honor killings had “loose morals” and deserved what they got.

Investigators have launched a criminal case against the suspected murderer of a 27-year-old Chechen woman who appears to have fallen victim to an “honor killing,” a grisly crime that the republic’s strong-man leader Ramzan Kadyrov has openly endorsed in the past.

"A 30-year-old local resident killed his own sister by striking her over the head with a blunt object. Afterward, he took the victim's body to an open pit in his vehicle and then buried it there," a spokesman for the Chechen prosecutors' office was cited as saying by news site Kavkazsky Uzel.

The killing occurred on Oct. 27, and the suspect was reportedly detained several days later.

"Initially he denied his guilt, although with irrefutable evidence [against him] he had

to confess: He committed the murder after an argument with his sister while he was in an agitated state," the source said in comments carried by Kavkazsky Uzel, adding that the brutal murder have been an honor killing.

Human rights activists have repeatedly sounded the alarm over honor killings in Chechnya, where women are killed by male family members for supposedly bringing shame or otherwise damaging their family's honor. "Throughout the past four years, Human Rights Watch has been receiving increasingly frequent reports of honor killings or attempted honor killings in Chechnya," Human Rights Watch reported in October 2012.

Often these killings are sparked by incidents of sexual impropriety, such as premarital sex.

Chechen leader Kadyrov openly expressed support for the practice in 2009 when he told reporters that a handful of victims of honor killings had "loose morals" and deserved what they got, The New York Times reported at the time.

"If a woman runs around and if a man runs around with her, both of them are killed," Kadyrov was cited by the paper as telling journalists. His comment was made in response to a question about seven young women who had been found dumped on the roadside after having been shot in the head.

Kadyrov has also openly encouraged polygamy and described women as being the property of their husbands, according to The New York Times.

Several suspected honor killings have been recorded in the republic in recent years. In the summer of 2011, two teenage girls were killed by their father in what was widely believed to have been an honor killing, Kavkazsky Uzel reported. In July, a suspected honor killing case against a man accused of murdering his 19-year-old sister was handed over to a court to begin trial, the website reported.

In late October, in another one of Russia's predominantly Muslim republics, Dagestan, a man was sentenced to seven years in a maximum security prison for killing his 22-year-old niece in 2010 for "bringing shame" to the family, Kavkazsky Uzel reported.

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