

Nemtsov Suspect Tells Court He Was Pressured to Confess

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Zaur Dadayev, charged with involvement in the murder of Russian opposition figure Boris Nemtsov, looks out from a defendants' cage inside a court building in Moscow, March 8, 2015.

A man charged with the killing of Russian opposition politician Boris Nemtsov on Wednesday told the court he was beaten and pressured to confess.

☒ Five people have been detained in connection with Nemtsov's shooting on Feb. 27. Zaur Dadayev was the only one who, according to a judge and investigators, confessed to the killing.

☒ Russian news agencies on Wednesday quoted Dadayev as telling the court that he had been abducted, beaten and pressured to confess to the shooting.

☒ "I was kidnapped by unknown men on March 5," he said in comments carried by the Interfax news agency. "I don't know where I was being kept, but the formal arrest at the Investigative Committee did not happen until March 7."

☒ Dadayev said that before he was arrested he was "told what to say and how to say it."

☒ At a court hearing in March, Dadayev didn't admit guilt in the courtroom and later retracted his confession given to investigators while a human rights activist who visited Dadayev in jail last month talked about signs of torture on Dadayev's body.

☒ Dadayev's lawyer, Ivan Gerasimov, said after the hearing that his client didn't even know who Nemtsov was before he was arrested.

☒ All five suspects are from Chechnya in the North Caucasus. Their origin raises a potentially sensitive issue, given the significant animosity for Caucasus groups among ethnic Russians. ☒

Dadayev had been an officer in the Chechen police troops. ☒

Nemtsov's killing just outside the Kremlin's walls shocked Russia's already beleaguered opposition supporters. Many of Nemtsov's allies and colleagues are skeptical about the Chechen theory, arguing that Nemtsov's death in a tightly secured area near the Kremlin wouldn't have been possible without official involvement. ☒

The Moscow City Court on Wednesday extended the arrest for Dadayev for another month.

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