Chechen Human Rights Leader Titiyev Released From Prison, 18 Months After Arrest

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Oyub Titiyev, a prominent human rights leader in Russia's republic of Chechnya, was released from Russian prison on Friday morning, more than 18 months after first being detained on drug charges his supporters say were fabricated.

Titiyev, who runs the office of the Memorial Human Rights Center in the southern Russian region, was detained in January 2018 by police who said they had found 206.9 grams (7.3 oz) of cannabis in his car after stopping him to check his documents. Human Rights Watch said the trial was based on "bogus marijuana possession charges" and his supporters say he was framed as punishment for his human rights work in Chechnya.

Related article: [The Court Case Against Oyub Titiyev Is a Tragic Farce](#)

After his release Friday morning, Titiyev said he would continue his human rights work.

"I will continue to work, but not in Chechnya — [I'll work] in a different region," he told the RBC news website.

"I am afraid to ask anyone in Chechnya to work in this sphere," he said. "There are no guarantees and I don't want to put my colleagues at risk," he added.

Titiyev was granted early release on parole earlier this month, less than three months after being sentenced to four years in a penal settlement on illegal drugs possession charges.

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