

Russia Opens Criminal Probe Into Disappearance of Young Chechen Woman

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Seda Suleimanova. sksos.org

Russian investigators have opened a criminal probe into the disappearance of a young Chechen woman who is feared to have been murdered by her family, the human rights group NC SOS [said](#) Wednesday.

Seda Suleimanova, 26, fled her native republic of Chechnya in October 2022 after relatives threatened to kill her for refusing an arranged marriage. In August, she was abducted from her apartment in St. Petersburg by a group of Russian police officers and unidentified Chechen men.

Suleimanova, who has not been heard from since her abduction, is feared to have been killed in a so-called “honor killing” — a practice in which a young woman is murdered by a relative, usually a man, for bringing dishonor or shame upon her family.

Related article: [Young Chechen Woman Likely Murdered in 'Honor Killing,' Rights Activists Say](#)

On Wednesday, the NC SOS group, which had helped the young woman flee Chechnya, said Russia's Investigative Committee opened a criminal probe into the "unknown disappearance" of Suleimanova.

"The progress and results of the criminal investigation have been placed under the supervision of the investigative department," NC SOS cited the law enforcement body as saying, adding that it was seeking additional information about the probe from the authorities.

The human rights group noted that news of the investigation came after multiple people filed incident reports with law enforcement agencies as part of a public campaign to find Suleimanova.

"We thank everyone who talks about Seda, sends [incident] reports, records videos, goes on pickets in their cities," NC SOS said in a post on the messaging app Telegram.

According to the group, law enforcement officials had previously said Suleimanova "voluntarily" returned to Chechnya and "decided to stay with her family."

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