

Veteran Crimean Tatar Activist Dies After Associates Detained by Russia **Ukraine**

Posted by:

Posted on : 2017/11/23 20:48:39

Crimean Tatar campaigner Vedzhie Kashka died after several fellow activists were detained by Russian officers. (file photo)

By the [Crimean Desk, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service](#), Nov 23, 2017 A prominent elderly Crimean Tatar activist has died after being caught up in an incident in which Russian security officers in Crimea detained several of her associates. Vedzhie Kashka, 82, became unwell and was taken away by ambulance in the Crimean city of Simferopol on November 23 after several fellow activists were detained by Russian officers on suspicion of extortion. Kashka subsequently died, according to sources in a local hospital and fellow Crimean Tatar activists. Speaking in Brussels after a meeting with European Council President Donald Tusk, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said he had informed Tusk "about the terrible events that took place in Crimea today" and lauded Kashka's "very important history of defending the interests of the Crimean Tatar people." Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin [posted on Twitter](#) that Kashka was a "heroic and courageous woman" and that her death was "another tragedy of despicable repressions Russia exerts in Crimea." Crimean Tatar activists Bekir Degermendzhi, Asan Chapukh, and Kyazim Ametov were detained in the incident, which took place in a cafe in the Crimean capital. Russian state media cited the Federal Security Service (FSB) branch in Crimea as saying that several members of the Mejlis, the Crimean Tatar self-governing body that has been outlawed by Russian authorities, were detained in Simferopol on suspicion extorting \$7,000 from a Turkish citizen. However, Mejlis member Gayana Yuksel told journalists that the detainees were not members of the body. Russia's state-run RIA Novosti news agency cited an unidentified law enforcement source as saying that Kashka died due to "stress" and accused the suspects of "cynically" using her as a pawn in the alleged extortion plot. [...] [https://www.rferl.org/a/crimea-tatar-a ... l-extortion/28871936.html](https://www.rferl.org/a/crimea-tatar-a-...-l-extortion/28871936.html)