



## The Prigozhin assassination case

**A closer look at his enemies and possible motives for murder - and no, the perpetrator is not who you might think!**

*Felix Abt*

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We are delighted that [Mr. Felix Abt](#), the publisher of the blog [easternangle.com](#) gave us the opportunity to re-publish a further of his interesting articles, for which we would like to thank him.

Here is his article:

Joe Biden reacted to the news of Prigozhin's death by stating, "*There's not much that happens in Russia that Putin's not behind,*" implying that the Russian president was the instigator of the assassination of the head of the Russian private mercenary army PMC Wagner. An American president certainly knows a thing or two about

extrajudicial killings because it is part of his own job. The last killing we know of for which this commander-in-chief is responsible was the killing of an [innocent family of ten](#) in Kabul by a U.S. drone strike.

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**Yevgeny Prigozhin**

## Biden points finger at Putin as Prigozhin's reported death seen as a warning to 'elites'

The judgment of many in the West was made immediately after the news broke, reflexively, without waiting for clarifications and investigations and without thinking about possible perpetrators and motives.

So why focus on only one party, the Russians and Putin, when Prigozhin had many enemies? That Prigozhin's failed mutiny resulted in a deep rift with Putin and the Russian state is undisputed.

### A chance for Prigozhin's enemies

But this very fact may have made many of his enemies feel that Prigozhin was very vulnerable because he was no longer under the protection of the Russian state and that the Russian authorities might not take action to avenge his death. Wouldn't that be an incentive, a welcome opportunity that his enemies had been waiting for a long time to get rid of Prigozhin?

The affair may never be fully resolved, especially with someone like Prigozhin who has spent much of his life in the shadows, and we may never get a full picture of what happened, and those behind it may be elusive.

Nevertheless, we should do what Western politicians and their media partners are not doing:

## A look at the possible killers and their motives

Before checking possible suspects, we should consider the possibility of an accident, which cannot be completely ruled out: Prigozhin's Embraer aircraft was old and poorly maintained and cared for by the Embraer aircraft manufacturer due to Western sanctions. Prigozhin and his commanders were certainly reckless when flying this aircraft together. RT reported that Prigozhin's pilot was suffering from myocarditis following a vaccination and mentioned the possibility that a heart attack may have caused the crash. Considering that many people wanted him dead, it is more likely that his death was caused by murder than by an accident.

There is no evidence that the crash was caused by an air-to-air or a surface-to-air missile. The explosion was probably caused by a bomb on board.

Prigozhin had an extraordinary life with many activities that were often controversial and violent, earning him many enemies who could be considered perpetrators:

It could have been the result of an internal power struggle within PMC Wagner. Hard, ruthless men who were extremely angry with Prigozhin for all sorts of reasons and also felt aggrieved by the organization of the mutiny may have taken revenge. They knew his travel plans and could have infiltrated his security staff and planted a bomb.

Friends and families of fallen Wagner soldiers could have taken revenge for the tens of thousands of men who, Prigozhin admitted, were thrown into battle and died there. Even the Russian Defense Ministry (and Putin) were appalled at the way he did it (which is why the Russian government changed recruiting procedures in February 2023, no longer allowing Prigozhin to recruit prisoners, and had to extend recruit training). Many of these individuals have criminal, violent backgrounds and may be angry that he caused the deaths of their relatives and friends. Criminal networks may have approached Wagners to have a bomb planted on the plane.

Other people in Russia: Some oligarchs sympathized with Prigozhin and his mutiny. After the mutiny failed, they may have wanted to get rid of him for their own safety to avoid detection. They may have corrupted Wagners and had him assassinated.

Immediately before his plane crashed near Moscow, Prigozhin was in Africa. There he met with government officials from the Central African Republic, to whom he assured security assistance.

He also met Sudanese militia leaders fighting the Sudanese government and consulted with government officials from Mali. In his last video, made while he was in Africa, he said he wanted to help Africans throw off the yoke of the West.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Victoria Nuland warned African governments against cooperating with Wagner. The United States also opposed Wagner's presence in Belarus. Prigozhin wanted to expand Russia's influence in Africa and thus crossed a red line set by the United States. So the U.S. also had a motive to get rid of him, and with the largest and most sophisticated intelligence organization in the world, they would also be able to organize such an action, as they have done in the past.

France sees its influence in West Africa waning and is all the more concerned about Wagner's influence and therefore has a motive to kill Prigozhin as well, even though, unlike the United States, it may not have the capabilities for such an operation inside Russia.

Prigozhin may have had some powerful friends in Africa, but he also had some serious enemies as he dealt with all sorts of shady characters, including people in the blood diamond business who may have wanted to get rid of him for their own reasons.

President Zelensky denied having anything to do with Prigozhin's death. But his word may be worth as much as his claim that Russia attacked Poland with a missile that killed Polish citizens, even though it was a Ukrainian missile. On the Ukrainian "Myrotvorets" assassination list, Prigozhin was a prominent target. Andriy Yermak, head of President Zelenky's office, and Mykhailo Podolyak, Zelenky's adviser, have stated in the past that they want to send Prigozhin to hell. Ukraine, on its own, has murdered a number of Russians on Russian soil. These operations were quite sophisticated. They would have the motive and the capability to kill Prigozhin inside Russia.

## IDEAS

# A Very Public Execution in Russia

A jet plunging out of the sky sends an unmistakable message.

By Tom Nichols



*A predictable verdict on Prigozhin's death from The Atlantic, a mouthpiece of the U.S. foreign policy establishment, even before any investigation has begun: "The sight of Prigozhin's jet falling out of the sky suggests that Russian President Vladimir Putin has conducted a public execution of a man who was once a trusted friend but later provided the greatest challenge that the Russian dictator has ever faced."*

Vladimir Putin is known to be cautious and calculating. Even if he wanted to get rid of Prigozhin, the timing and circumstances would militate against such an action. After all, Putin has gone to great lengths to co-organize a smooth BRICS summit and reassure the BRICS countries that Russia is stable. To publicly blow up Prigozhin's plane, including pilots and crew, in the middle of the BRICS summit makes no sense. Had Prigozhin died at a later date, for example in an ambush by terrorists in Africa funded by Russia's FSB, no one would have suspected Russian involvement, and the embarrassment for the Kremlin would have been avoided. But

if Russian authorities wanted Prigozhin out of the way, it would have been natural to accuse him of corruption, since that was undoubtedly an essential part of his business model.

Certainly, the military leadership also had an axe to grind with Prigozhin, who had often insulted them publicly. But they would hardly have organized such an operation without the president's approval. Moreover, Wagner's military commanders, such as Utkin, who was on the plane with Prigozhin, reportedly still belonged to the Russian military intelligence agency GRU.

Moreover, Prigozhin posed no threat to Putin. After one horribly failed mutiny, he would not dare another. After his death, Putin described Prigozhin as a businessman who achieved good results for himself and for the common good when Putin asked him to. Putin alluded to the fact that Prigozhin was selfish but not dangerous to the state. Since Prigozhin kept his bargain with Putin and acted as a team player from then on, there was no need to get him out of the way. Putin therefore had no compelling motive.

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