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Clan wars in the Kremlin - does Putin have control over the contenders for succession?



Clan wars have been intensifying in Russia as the country enters into its third year of war. As always, the purpose of those clan wars relates to money and power.

The power of father and son Patrushev, head of all intelligence services Nikolai and minister of agriculture Dimitry, has been rapidly declining, as have their prospects of being the principal successors to the rule of Vladimir Putin.

They have been losing influence from the growing Kovalchuk clan since Boris, the son of financial and media magnate Yury Kovalchuk, was **promoted** and has a significant role in Vladimir Putin's administration.

As a standard, Russia's clan wars happen on multiple levels between the clans and within the clans.

Everyone tries to get a more lucrative piece of the budget or get on board with one of the corporations. It is not a secret anymore that all Russian large corporations and banks have permanent intelligence or interior ministry representatives.

Whose influence is growing?

While Nikolai Patrushev is still the head of the Russian Security Council and Alexander Bortnikov is still the head of the FSB, the lower echelons of hierarchy within agencies have been exposed to various changes since Russia's original plan for Ukraine collapsed.

Since then, Vladimir Putin has been sceptical regarding everything reported by Russian intelligence. Instead, he prefers to rely on those he trusts. Yury Kovalchuk is one of those trusted men.

Yury Kovalchuk does not have a significant role in the Russian government. He holds stakes in various financial and media corporations, but most importantly, he is close to Putin, and he played a dominant role in Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

He is also a key ideologist of the global dominance of Russia's Christian Russki tribe.

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Yury Kovalchuk has been obsessed with anti-Ukrainian sentiments and probably influenced Putin during the COVID lockdown. There were reports that during the COVID lockdown, Kovalchuk, an old friend of Vladimir Putin's, relocated to the compound of Russia's president and stayed there for over a year, almost isolated from the entire world.

Vladimir Putin, Yury Kovalchuk, and a few other people close to them decided to attack Ukraine based on false intelligence reports that promised Russia a rapid and victorious outcome in Ukraine.

The beginning of suspicions about the security services

After everything went wrong with Russia's attempt to take Kyiv in 3 days, Vladimir Putin started to suspect Russian intelligence of being incompetent, or worse, disloyal.

In today's Russia, where no one trusts anyone, divisions within any of the security agencies, including the FSB, might have facilitated the Crocus City Hall attack.

Those divisions might have intentionally neglected preparations by the terrorists because the clan they belong to has determined that such a catastrophe would benefit them financially and politically.

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Igor Andreev, the vice president of Rossiya Bank, which belongs to Yury Kovalchuk, was recently arrested.

Similarly, a few days ago, a nephew of the super-powerful Chechen senator Suleiman Geremeyev, very close to the leader of the Chechen republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, was also arrested.

The Chechen factor

It is well known that there is an ongoing “mortal combat” between the Russian intelligence and the leader of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov.

The arrest of Suleiman Geremeyev’s relative happened after the Crocus City Hall attack, when Moscow streets and public places were flooded with public security guards from the so-called Kadyrovtsy battalion, which ranks were full of people loyal to Ramzan Kadyrov.

This clearly indicates that Vladimir Putin trusts the Chechen leader more than the bosses of Russian security agencies, who are annoyed with the influence Ramzan Kadyrov has on Vladimir Putin.

Vladimir Putin loves the Chechen leader, given that he thinks that Ramzan Kadyrov has no ambition to rule Russia. Putin’s assumption could be wrong, but no one could convince him of that.

Russian agencies don’t like Ramzan Kadyrov for various reasons since they were unable to proclaim victory over the Chechen Republic during the 2 wars in the 1990s.



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Akhmad Kadyrov, Ramzan Kadyrov’s father then volunteered to become president of Chechnya, loyal to Vladimir Putin, the role that was assumed by Ramzan Kadyrov after his father was assassinated in 2004.

Putin, therefore, prefers those who do not exhibit visible presidential ambitions or have real armed men behind them.

Nikolai Patrushev is too powerful, and, therefore, Putin preferred Yury Kovalchuk’s son to be advanced to an important role in the president’s administration.

This was definitely a devastating development for Nikolai Patrushev, whose son was on top of the list of Putin’s successors. There were numerous jokes in Russia about President Patrushev, either Nikolai or Dimitry.

Even though the clash of clans for supremacy is ongoing, the personal characteristics of their leaders do not indicate that there will be significant changes in Russia, regardless of who wins.

Nikolai Patrushev is a conspiracy theorist, and Yury Kovalchuk shares a twisted view of Russia, detached from reality, the dominant Russki tribe in Russia, and Russia’s overall role in humanity and civilisation.

Vladimir Putin has no intention of leaving anytime soon. However, the clans are already clashing, seeking a better role and position after Putin is gone one way or another.