

"They Got Rid Of Khashoggi's Body By Dissolving It": Top Turkish Official

02/11/2018



Ankara: The body of journalist Jamal Khashoggi was "dissolved" after he was murdered and dismembered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul a month ago, an advisor to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Friday.

The claim echoed what a Turkish official had told the Washington Post -- for which Khashoggi was a contributor -- that authorities are investigating a theory the body was destroyed in acid.

Highlights

1. Authorities investigating theory that his body was destroyed in acid
2. "Body cut up because it was easier to dissolve": Turkish officer
3. Saudi Arabia has faced international condemnation over the killing

"We now see that it wasn't just cut up, they got rid of the body by dissolving it," Yasin Aktay, an advisor to Erdogan and official in Turkey's ruling party, told the

Hurriyet newspaper on Friday.

"According to the latest information we have, the reason they cut up the body is it was easier to dissolve it," Aktay said.

Saudi Arabia has faced a torrent of international condemnation over the killing of the royal insider-turned-critic.

Turkey's chief prosecutor on Wednesday confirmed for the first time that Khashoggi was strangled as soon as he entered the consulate on October 2 as part of a planned hit, and his body was then dismembered and destroyed.

"They aimed to ensure no sign of the body was left. This is what is understood from the prosecutor's statement, said Aktay, who was close to the journalist.

"Killing an innocent person is one crime, the treatment and extent of what was done to the body is another crime and dishonour."

The Turkish official quoted by the Washington Post said that "biological evidence" found in the consulate's garden indicated the body was likely disposed of near where Khashoggi was killed.

"Khashoggi's body was not in need of burying," the official told the US newspaper on the condition of anonymity.

Saudi authorities have denied Turkish police permission to search a well in the consulate's garden, but did allow them to take water samples for analysis, according to local media reports.

The murder has placed strain on the decades-old alliance between the United States and Saudi Arabia and tarnished the image of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday it may take "a handful more weeks" before Washington has enough evidence to impose sanctions on the individuals responsible.
