

DOSH

DIGEST



**Zarema Sadulayeva
and her husband were murdered
in Grozny on August 11, 2009.
The murderers have not
been captured yet.**

ISSUE #7

CAUCASIAN PUZZLES
FOR THE KREMLIN

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CANCER IN CHECHNYA:
A NATIONAL THREAT

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President of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov scheduled an interview with DOSH magazine for March 10th. So, Abdulla Duduyev and I arrived in Ingushetia the day before to get a better understanding of the situation in the republic from discussions with colleagues, local journalists and human rights activists, as well as local residents. We went to a rally organized by relatives of those who had disappeared. People were demanding from the authorities to shed light on the destiny of those who had been kidnapped.

The slogan "Yevkurov is our President and he must help us to find our relatives!" was the main idea of the rally that took place in the village of Pliyevo. There are many who still believe in President Yevkurov and his genuine eagerness to change the situation for the better.

The first impression that strikes the eye here: men and women are depressed, they look worried, and the situation here is very intense.

After talking with rally participants we intended to pay a visit to the parents of Magomed Yevloyev in Malgobek, but

we failed to do so due to an unexpected trouble which is not worth reporting here since this episode has already been reported more than once in mass media.

The following day President Yevkurov cordially met us in his office. We discussed many issues, almost all which at present are especially distressing the society. The most important problem, according to the President, is the fate of the citizens of Ingushetia who had been convicted and sentenced to prison for felony crimes (we told him many of these had been condemned under fabricated criminal cases and that DOSH reported about such cases) and those who are exposed to cruel treatment and torture in places of confinement. Yevkurov is certain that such treatment will turn them into kamikaze by the time of their release. He told us that he was discussing the idea of creating humane work conditions for convicts in prisons, providing the possibility for them to observe religious rites, primarily prayers, with federal authorities. President Yevkurov is convinced that it will make it easier for them to return to normal life and integrate into society. He emphasized that he meant not only the Ingushs but all natives of Northern Caucasus Republics who are in need of such assistance.

If the leader of Ingushetia succeeds in implementing this idea, it will be an undoubted achievement of his presidency.

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People kidnapped by unidentified power structures and by unidentified armed people in Ingushetia and in other cities of Russia is perhaps one of the most painful problems of today's Ingushetia. When we arrived, it was the fifth day of the rally. In this of cloudy, rainy, cold weather dozens of people continued to stand around the fire in front of the Pliyevo Administration, taking turns.

THE ONLY PATH TO LIBERATION

Svetlana ALIYEVA

Sixty six years have passed. Generations replace each other. The first decade of a new century brought new joys and trials. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the deported and those who survived by a miracle enter into this life but the grief of their fathers and grandparents stays in their souls. The bitter imperishable memory of the sufferings has been infused in the very genes of the descendants of those harmed in ethnic reprisals.

Perhaps they would be able to forget about the tragedy of their parents if only it had not been methodically repeated up until this day that Stalin, this diligent "father of nations", was under the necessity (!) to mercilessly "punish" the Chechens and the Ingushs for alleged betrayal of the Motherland. Nobody remembers that Hitler's troops never reached the Chechen-Ingushetia region whereas the fact that the Chechens and the Ingushs contributed a lot to make the Brest fortress legendary, preventing the surrender of the fortress to the enemy, is passed into silence.

The repeating of Stalin's villainous slander is accompanied by offensive characteristics that are warming up the narrow-minded exasperation and increasing xenophobia. The hideous truth is that new insinuations and lies, like any other antisocial and anti-constitutional manifestations, are not only tolerated but welcomed with delight. Who benefits from inflaming mutual animosity among the peoples of the Russian Federation? And how can the descendants of repressed people not fear history repeating itself?

It is time, finally, for all of us, victims and supposed winners, to crawl out from the heaps of verbal ideological rubbish varnishing the real history of our country with all its violence and blood, to get rid of Stalinist ethnic policy concepts and start living in accordance with historical truth. It is the only possible path to our liberation.



On February 26th, 2004, the European Parliament recognized the 1944 deportation of the Chechen people as an act of genocide.

Soviet textbooks on Communist Party History called the deportations a "distortion of the Leninist ethnic policy during the period of Stalin's cult of personality."

Olivier Dupuis (photo), then a member of the European Parliament and Secretary of the Transnational Radical Party, carried out an unprecedented hunger strike from January 15th to February 23rd demanding that a paragraph recognizing the 1944 deportation of the Chechen people as an act of genocide should be accepted and included into the Resolution of the European Parliament.

26/02/2004 | European Parliament recommendation to the Council on EU-Russia relations

15. Believes that the deportation of the entire Chechen people to Central Asia on 23 February 1944 on the orders of Stalin constitutes an act of genocide within the meaning of the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907 and the Convention for the Prevention and Repression of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948.

MEMOIRS

Yunus SASHIL



It took a whole hour for Salavdi to tell us his gloomy story of the deportation day. He was 11 years old back then and he remembers everything pretty well. There was no road to their village and people came by foot, with carts, to Tsavdeno. There, people were loaded on to American Studebaker trucks and brought to Grozny. They travelled at night and his mother pointed out the villages that they were passing. A continuous moaning could be heard from each of them, though nobody was there. It was the moaning of cattle parting with their masters, as if the animals understood what kind of misfortune had occurred. He remembered this roar for the rest of his life. Therefore, it is not possible for him to keep cattle.

Many people died of typhus, men and women were falling like leaves from the trees. Their dead bodies were taken away in carts and unloaded into pits. More than a half of their fellow-villagers died. Salavdi owes his survival to a German family that fed him out of pity. These Germans, who were also deported, ground frozen potatoes, added onion and baked delicious flat cakes. They saved his life.

Salavdi told a story about a hypnotist who came to their village in Kazakhstan and tried to put everybody to sleep. However, no hypnosis can take those who lament their misery. Salavdi then continued his story about the miserable life of a youngster who from childhood was fed up with humiliation and hardships. It was a desolate, desperate fate of a boy deported in 1944, who never had the luck to get back to his native hearth. His mother, father, brothers, and sisters were taken away from him. In fact, the child within himself was killed at the age of 11, since afterwards he has had no opportunity to witness a

single happy and normal day for the rest of his life. All those 50 years that passed between 1944 and 1994, this man was only climbing towards the light, yet he did not gain a worthy reward in return for his efforts and torments.

He recalled, almost in tears, how he was building his house, the roof of which is now demolished, and the walls are pierced. I helped Salavdi to mend the roof the entire day while he kept speaking. I was soaked with fatigue, more from his joyless slow-paced narration than from carrying roof tiles, climbing over safety staircases and walking on the roof with the risk to fall down and break my neck any minute. The old man has no money even to buy a pack of cigarettes. Soft, good-natured, helpless and honest, he worked his whole life at construction sites either as an unskilled laborer or as a loader. He never stole things, nor made dirty tricks. He only worked hard. When thinking about him, I get the feeling that I owe something to this man. And how to repay, is it even possible in this case? Should I give him money to fix the roof? I do not have money. Should I share my bread with him? That is what I am trying to do now.

Every deported Caucasian carries an ineradicable stamp in the soul from the stay in Kazakhstan. It is a kind of symbol, like the ones that camp workers had. There are plenty of these symbols but you can always distinguish the main one. As for myself, when I was a little boy I lived with my maternal uncles. My grandmother died, my aunt died when she was a young girl, my uncle's wife died, as did another girl of my age. Only two of my uncles and I survived. The uncles were delivering fuel for the collective farm from the district center. It took them 24 hours to make a roundtrip. I stayed at home alone when they were away.

When they returned they could stay at home for another 24 hours. I was a four-year old boy at that time. I used to hide on the sleeping bench of the Russian heating stove. I used to put the firewood that my uncles left for heating next to me on the sleeping bench. After the uncles went away the room became filled with rats. Oh, how scared I was and I threw logs at the rats to protect myself. Eventually I ran out of logs and the rats started to prowl about, often running over my body. I don't know how I escaped being eaten by them. The sound of rats squeaking is imprinted into my brain. And when my soul is wretched I can distinctly hear this squeak. As for me, rats and their squeaks serve as my main personal symbol of Kazakhstan.

Once I was walking along the only street of our village. The street was long. Bitter cold and hunger drove me to the house of aunt Marusya. She was a good-natured woman and she was compassionate towards the Chechens and let them into her house. She gave me a piece of brown bread. I went back home clenching this piece of bread in my small fist. My fingers were getting frozen and I put the fist inside my pants. A man passed by, riding a horse. He picked me up and placed in front of him upon the saddle. My hand slipped out of my pants and was again exposed to the cold. My fingers numbed and my morsel fell into the snow. I had the feeling: had the bread not fallen down, everything would be different.

An expedition, several men and a woman named Raya, settled in the neighboring village. In spring they planted potatoes. When the plants sprouted and bloomed, I went to their garden and, sapping a few bunches with my fingers, stole ten small bird-egg-sized potatoes. Fedya, a member of the expedition, caught the thief red-handed. He pulled me to the yard by my ear, it burned. They made me give back the stolen potatoes. They were talking, laughing, and often pronounced the phrase "to teach him a lesson." I did not know its meaning but I hate this phrase ever since then. Then, they brought a rifle and ordered me to go to the brink of the sand cliff behind the house, placed me near the edge and fired a shot in my direction. Scared, I jumped down the cliff, reached the river and climbed up an alder tree as if I was a monkey. Clinging to the tree, I stayed there until darkness fell. When I climbed down I discovered that my abdomen was all in scratches. The wounds didn't heal for a long time together with the lasting feeling of standing in front of the rifle aimed at me. And this is the third symbol. I don't like potatoes ever since.

CAUCASIAN PUZZLES FOR THE KREMLIN

Israpil SHOVKHALOV,
Abdulla DUDUEV



We know this name for almost two months now, the name that everyone was trying to guess since November 12th, 2009, when President Dmitry Medvedev in his message to the RF Federal Assembly announced that "there should be a man personally responsible for the state of affairs in this region (Northern Caucasus). We will appoint such a man."

Here he is, quite unexpectedly for many, the first in the history of contemporary Russia: former governor of Krasnoyarsk Region Alexander Khloponin was assigned the official representative of the Kremlin in Northern Caucasus.

With the aim to demonstrate the seriousness of a new stage of the federal policy in the Caucasus, Northern Caucasus Federal Area was separated from Southern Federal Area by Decree of President of Russia.

Historically considered being an outpost of Russian interests in the Caucasus, this area comprises mainly "problematic" republics: Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachayevo-Cherkessia, as well as North Ossetia.

Stavropolsky Region became the center of the new territorial division and its capital, Pyatigorsk, will host the staff office of Alexander Khloponin, Authorized Representative of RF President in Northern Caucasus Federal Area, endowed with another governorship of Vice Prime-Minister of the Government, apparently to give him a greater notability in the eyes of the Heads of the Regions entrusted to him.

"You will have the power of economic order tied to the duties of Vice Prime-Minister of the Government of Russia and, on the other hand, the powers tied to the authorities conferred by the Presidential vertical office, i.e. those powers traditionally

belonging to the President's representative in the federal area, those pertaining to personnel, the work with law enforcement structures and to all areas under the supervision of Authorized Representative," Dmitry Medvedev explained.

A week later, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, at the conference on regional development in Pyatigorsk in which Khloponin and heads of Northern Caucasus Federal Area regions participated, emphasized the administrative powers of the new appointee: "Any proposition of the newly assigned Authorized Representative and Vice Prime-Minister Alexander Khloponin should immediately be followed by decision-making in respect of leaders and personnel of territorial bodies and federal structures who will be found guilty of violations in their career-service or not wishing or not capable of proper arrangement of activity," Russian Prime Minister emphasized.

Ever since the Tsar's times, the Kremlin has racked its brain as to what to do with the Caucasus? It is a multiethnic territory with its own traditions and culture that has remained the most problematic area both for the tsarist and Soviet Russia. After the collapse of the USSR, the Caucasus problem became a "stumbling stone" for Russia: can it ever be resolved, by what means and at what cost - this will in many ways determine whether the integrity of the country, its stability and image on the international scene can be saved.

Against the background of the military operations in Chechnya, the problems of the neighboring territories were given second-rate priority and it started to seem as if things were calm and all the problems of the Caucasus were associated exclusively with the Chechen Republic. However, after Chechnya was "pacified" it turned out that this was far from being the case. Certainly, the war made an impact on the situation in the region

and the entire country. However, since the end of the war, the number of Caucasian problems did not decrease, but quite the opposite: the entire Caucasus has gradually transformed into a single large-scale Chechnya. It became evident that the only military method of solving the problems in the region is apparently insufficient. It seems that Moscow does not understand what to do, or, let us say, does not quite clearly understand. The sole solution they came to is to bring into play the tried and true policy of threats and bribery, the policy of carrot and stick.

The sole solution they came to is to bring into play the tried and true policy of threats and bribery, the policy of carrot and stick.

The stick has already worked hard enough, now it's the time to sweeten the relations with a carrot. But let one only add some sugar, and in no case should the whip be set aside, since the Power Vertical may stagger.

After Medvedev's initial announcement, there were various rumors about who would be assigned chief of Northern Caucasus. Potential contenders, according to mass media and numerous analysts, included President of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov, Vice Prime-Minister of the Russian Federation Sergey Sobyenin, first deputy head of Presidential Administration Vladislav Surkov (a Chechen on his father's side), Dmitry Kozak, deputy head of Interior Ministry Arkady Yedeleev (recently dismissed), and the businessmen Mikhail Gutseriyev and Suleiman Kerimov.

The choice of the federal center was unexpected: Alexander Khloponin, a man who has never had any association with the Caucasus and has not been spotted to have any connections with those born in the region.

As it was immediately grasped by some sharp political commentators, the logic of this assignment was clear: Khloponin was selected because he is not incorporated into the local



elite, he is rich, so it would be hard for regional clans to bribe him, and he would be able to take up an independent position.

However, as some experts sarcastically say, the largest and the most powerful clan is the one in the Kremlin.

It is obvious that the upcoming Olympic Games in Sochi give rise to worries in Moscow about the situation in the Caucasus. However, the decision to create one more federal area in the south of Russia was unexpected for the majority of the Russians, as usual. Predictability has never been an identifying feature of Russian leaders.

In May 2000, when federal areas were introduced by the then new President Vladimir Putin, the name Northern Caucasus Federal Area appeared. But soon, for unclear reasons, Northern Caucasus Federal Area started to be called Southern Federal Area. Neither then, nor prior to the latest reorganizations, was Southern Federal Area anywhere close to be balanced: Northern Caucasus being its integral part drew everything, attention, investments, donations, and resources unto itself.

Redrawing the administrative map of Northern Caucasus is not a novelty. Before the 1917 revolution, many territories of the present Northern Caucasus Republics, with the exception of Central and South Dagestan and Karachaevo-Cherkessia, were included into Terskaya Oblast. The latter also included a part of the present Stavropolye and Pyatigorsk. Vladikavkaz was the capital of Terskaya Oblast which at that time was Russian and not Ossetian.

The USSR also attempted to create an administrative unit of Northern Caucasus: in 1929-34 such a unit existed exactly within the same boundaries in which it is now reconstructed but the majority of the republics were autonomous regions at that time.

We can only guess why Adygueya and Krasnodarsky Region were left beyond the new borders of Northern Caucasus. It may be possible that certain Olympics related considerations





play a role here: the Olympic Sochi is cut off by a new administrative line on the map from the "troubled" zone of the Caucasus, at least formally.

Adygueya was not included into Northern Caucasus Area by territorial criteria since it is an enclave within Krasnodarsky Region, whereas the inclusion of Stavropolye into the new federal area can, in the opinion of experts, be explained by the desire of the authorities not to let Northern Caucasus be viewed as a territory with entirely "Caucasus" natives.

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Pyatigorsk was selected the capital of the new territory, which is quite a reasonable decision at first sight, although not the only possible one. If the capital of the new territory had been selected by the Kremlin in one of the republics of Northern Caucasus Federal Area, this would, to say the least, have given rise to needless distemper in these republics: why they selected them instead of us? Furthermore, the fact that the status of the capital city of a federal area was awarded to a small provincial town has its own advantages from the viewpoint of the current policy pursued by Moscow: unlike Rostov-on-Don (capital of Southern Federal Area), Pyatigorsk is located directly in the center of the new federal area and on the territory of the more or less quiet Stavropolye. Besides, this city is considered the unofficial trade capital of the region with numerous markets operating here, being a small model representation of the multiethnic Northern Caucasus.

In his interview to Forbes magazine, answering the question about his own ideas how to improve the situation in the Caucasus, Khloponin said that he did not know anyone in the world who would be able to propose an overnight improvement formula for the Caucasus. He added: "As this proposal was rather unexpected, I need to spend enough time in the region

in order to understand the situation. I do not know all the intricacies of the Caucasus and I surely need to learn them. This is an ancient land with deep-set traditions which one should not disregard. And one should not associate the Caucasus exclusively with criminality. It is a very interesting and original territory. In my opinion, it is the most worthy part of the Russian state and therefore I am interested in working here. A lot of formulas and programs have been written but the best one is to work hard. As a matter of fact, a greater participation of the federal center is crucial. The most distressing issue is, of course, unemployment and the criminal situation. The President set the task precisely: develop the economy and create jobs."

The creation of a new federal area and the appointment of Khloponin as its Head received a positive welcome in the republics, at least, on the surface.

"We hope major attention will be focused on building new industrial enterprises and creation of jobs as well as attracting both Russian and foreign investments," said Ramzan Kadyrov, President of Chechnya.

"I'm a military man, but I hold it good that the President of the country entrusted this important region to an economic executive rather than to a military person as had been expected by many," Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, Head of Ingushetia told us. "There is an abundance of military people in the region while we lack business-friendly and entrepreneurial leaders."

"At first sight, it seems to be an unexpected appointment but in reality it is a tough-minded and a proper choice. Khloponin is an assiduous manager and it means that he knows how to attract investments, which is of paramount importance to our region," said Boris Ebzeyev, President of Karachaevo-Cherkessia.

President of Kabardino-Balkaria Arsen Kanokov remarked that Khloponin, as a modern thinking person, is well familiar with the "ideas of modernization that are necessary in many spheres of our public life."

At the same time, a source close to the secretariat of the Authorized Representative expressed the opinion that the newly established federal area is considered as presenting an indirect threat to the constituent republics. As explained by our companion, the Heads of the republics used to have a direct access to Prime Minister or President, thus making it possible to solve many issues that were usually "suspended" by federal ministries and departments, and now they will have to solve everything through the secretariat of the Authorized Representative and personally Khloponin. Such a barrier, in his opinion, will please nobody.

The key to normalization of the situation in Northern Caucasus is, in the opinion of the President of Russia, the development of the region's economy and consolidation of its social stability. The future will show whether the Kremlin's decisions will bring productive results and whether Khloponin will succeed in solving his tasks.

LEGAL SUCCESSION

Photo: Sergey RASULOV / NewsTeam

Natalia KRAINOVA



Magomedsalam Magomedov

and Magomedsalam Magomedov, Deputy of the Republic's People's Assembly.

This list lacks the name Said Amirov, one of the principal politicians in the republic, and consists of young contenders lacking experience, which gave rise to discontent and intellectual unrest among Dagestan deputies. During the November session of the People's Assembly, the deputies proposed addressing the President with a request for consultations. However, in reality, two letters were sent to Moscow with two mutually excluding proposals. Soon after that a Kremlin representative arrived and held consultations in such a way that the next day the deputies declared their full support for the choice of the President and their readiness to accept any candidate that Moscow might send.

An ambiguous situation occurred. Despite cancelled presidential elections in Dagestan, a genuine war of discrediting started in the press. It was a fight for the opinion of only two electioneers: Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin. PR-campaigns were focused upon two main candidates, as they were then considered by experts: Magomed "Smolensky" and Magomed Abdulayev. Mukhu Aliyev was also considered to have a chance but the elections disaster in Derbent very much tarnished his reputation. Magomedsalam Magomedov was looked upon as an outsider. His father is considered to be the chief architect of the corruption system that spread all over the republic. It would

The new President of Dagestan Magomedsalam Magomedov was inaugurated on February 20th in Makhachkala. The main virtue that allowed him to take office is, in the opinion of many, the fact that he belongs to the most influential local clan as he is the son of Magomedali Magomedov, Chairman of the State Council, who was Head of the Republic for 15 years. A new redistribution of power and property has been initiated in Dagestan. A large part of the population not participating in the above process is first of all interested in whether the ascension of Magomedov will mean a full-scale return to old practices or if the son will be different from his father.

The appointment was unexpected. Last December President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev approved the list of candidates proposed by the United Russia party: Mukhu Aliyev, at that time President of the republic, Magomed Magomedov from Smolensk, a businessman and advisor of Chairman of Federation Council, Magomed Abdulayev, a Moscow professor who made a rapid career in the Republican government in six months and became Vice Prime-Minister, Saigitgusein Magomedov, Head of Dagestan Board of Treasury who for the second time tried his luck in the presidential campaign,

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However, in reality, two letters were sent to Moscow with two mutually excluding proposals. Soon after that a Kremlin representative arrived and held consultations in such a way that the next day the deputies declared their full support for the choice of the President and their readiness to accept any candidate that Moscow might send.

seem that the return to the past is impossible against the background of permanent declarations by high authorities of the country that the war on corruption is underway.

The republic was waiting for the decision of Moscow for almost two months. Experts explained the delay as due to the fact that

Deputies of the People's Assembly who recently rebelled against the "President's list", cast their votes in favor of the new presidential candidate cheerfully and unanimously.



none of the contenders satisfied the required qualifications and that Moscow was trying to arrange the optimal President - Prime Minister alliance. There were rumors about the cost of the presidential position. The situation became even more unstable after the attempted murder of Nikolai Alchiyev, deputy Chairman of the People's Assembly. The government was practically paralyzed, department directors even refused to give interviews for three months, and there was no serious work done at all.

Magomedsalam Magomedov was looked upon as an outsider. His father is considered to be the chief architect of the corruption system that spread all over the republic. It would seem that the return to the past is impossible against the background of permanent declarations by high authorities of the country that the war on corruption is underway.

Many were shocked when Medvedev announced the name of the future President of Dagestan. Despite the disturbing rumors about possible demarches, the Parliament unanimously gave support to the candidate with such an inspiring enthusiasm which had not been witnessed within the walls of the local White House for a long time.

However, SMS-responses sent by readers to non-governmental publications of Dagestan were far from being approving. "Farewell, Dagestan, you have been killed." "People of Dagestan, at last you have learned how the power should be won." "Back to the 1990s." "Coming to power of the clan that destroyed everything sacred for Dagestan could be seen only in a nightmare." "Like father like son." "Putin and Medvedev once again displayed: the ignore everything. This is a new cycle of the sale of profitable offices." "The appointment of

Magomedsalam Magomedov as President is an enormous, bright and bitter-taste victory for corruption and the clan system!" "I recommend this slogan to Magomedsalam: I will catch up what my father was not so lucky to grab, I will sell what my father did not have the time to sell." "Now we can be absolutely sure that the only real forces capable of establishing justice in Dagestan are those from the forest."

However, some people feel optimistic due to two facts. First, Magomedov possesses great administrative resources that have been built up by his father. There are people of the clan behind him who represent the force that will ensure implementation of their decisions into real life. This was exactly what Mukhu Aliyev lacked. His opponents reproached him: "What has he achieved? He's just a talker."

Mukhu Aliyev had no team behind him. All the four years of his presidency he shuffled officials around trying to create an efficient team but all of his announcements remained mere declarations. The second disadvantage of the first President was his bad relations with local oligarchs, above all, with Suleiman Kerimov who made several efforts to financially contribute to the welfare of the republic by registering his residence in Derbent and contributing almost two billion rubles to the republican budget, then by proposing to buy Anzhi football club that was short of money. Both projects failed because Mukhu Aliyev interfered. Now the republic is open for Kerimov. It is no secret that he lobbied for Magomedsalam Magomedov in the Kremlin, and his presence at the inauguration ceremony of the new President was yet another confirmation of their intention to work together.

"Magomedsalam Magomedov is the most worthy candidate, he is an economist, Doctor of Sciences, he is familiar with the problems of the republic, he has experience as a legislative

and executive official of the administration, and knows the actual problems of business," says Kamil Davdiyev, Vice Speaker of Dagestan Parliament, leader of the Republican Division of Spravedlivaya Rossiya. "What does the republic need most of all? It needs opportunities for social and economic development, to overcome problems in the economy, to create jobs, and to attract investments. Another problem is the war on terrorism. Magomedsalam Magomedov possesses all the qualities that the leader of the republic should have to solve the above-mentioned tasks. In my opinion, he is the most suitable figure to consolidate Dagestan society. He is just the right person who can serve as a joining link between the elites in the republic and the "new Dagestanis" who live outside the republic and are now ready to work here, provided that the appropriate conditions are provided for them. What about the father as a factor? His influence will be positive," the politician declared in his interview to a local newspaper.

"I have big hopes for the newly appointed President," says Svetlana Isayeva, Chairperson of the human rights organization Mothers of Dagestan. "Everything that occurred during the presidency of Mukhu Aliyev was a nightmare: abduction of people, illegal settlement of conflicts without court trials, leaflets with threats aimed at lawyers, human rights defenders and journalists. All the promises he gave on TV proved to be false. He did not respond to our appeals. He once asked Adilguerei Magomedtagirov, Minister of Internal Affairs, "What do human rights activists need?" and the Minister replied: "They need a bullet in the forehead." I think he very much liked this reply. His term has now expired, and I hope that the situation in the republic regarding human rights protection will be improved. The issue of getting young people back from the forest is now given attention and the President declared that he is ready for dialog. My hopes are high, though it depends upon many factors; he himself is not the only one."

Experts tend to consider this appointment "strange" in view of the upcoming elections of Russian President. Dagestan is famous for the capability of its leaders to provide the required percentage of votes. That is why Magomedsalam Magomedov will have to repay his debt in two years to the one he owes his promotion. One group of experts believes it is Medvedev, oth-

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ers think it is Putin. Magomedsalam Magomedov is a convenient figure from the viewpoint of foreign policy as well. Mukhu Aliyev manifested an excessive adherence, in the opinion of Moscow, to principles regarding the division of the Samur waterbed with Azerbaijan. Now Russia is interested in friendly

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relations with its southern neighbor and may, for this purpose, sacrifice the interests of Dagestan.

After he became President, Magomedsalam Magomedov many times talked about society consolidation but he never mentioned the name of the first President, which indicates that there will be no continuity in political life. Mukhu Aliyev ostentatiously stayed away from both the inauguration ceremony



Mukhu Aliyev

and the Parliament session at which the new President was approved. According to rumors, he refused the position in the Federation Council that Moscow offered him and in his telephone conversation with Vladislav Surkov, Deputy Head of the President's Administration, Aliyev supposedly sharply criticized the choice of the President and called the candidate selection procedure corrupted. The only announcement that he made in public was an appeal to the citizens of Dagestan on the website of a governmental information agency: "I did everything possible and took every effort to fulfill the oath that I gave to the people of Dagestan. Practically, every day of these four years passed before your eyes. I think that much has been accomplished over these four years. As you understand, it is impossible to eradicate systematic defects of society over such a short period of time."

FOLLOWING THE CHECHEN SCENT



The Amerkhanov brothers (see photo) were meant to be accused of terrorism. Instead, drugs were planted on them, and now they will very likely be taken to court for drug crimes.

In early December 2010, the two Amerkhanov brothers, Murat and Yunus, were detained in an apartment owned by Zaur Guliyev, an Azerbaijan native, in Solnechnogorsk, a town in Moscow Region. The detainment was organized as a well supported special operation to capture bandits. The capture group consisted of staff members of the Moscow Region Chief Investigative Board and OMON wearing face masks, 15 people total. The search and interrogation lasted 8 hours.

The Amerkhanov family is well known in Solnechnogorsk. They have lived there since 1995, having fled from the war in Chechnya.

"Murat is doing business. He is the co-founder of a car service. He is 31 years old. Yunus is 21 years old. He graduated from the Department of Economics and Management and he planned to become a lawyer." Anzor, the older Amerkhanov brother, told our DOSH correspondent. "That night they stayed with their Azerbaijani friend. In the morning 15 men in face masks together with several civilians burst into the apartment. Everyone was put down to the floor and then they beat them up. Zaur saw how they put small bags with cannabis in their pockets. I know for certain that neither Murat, nor Yunus are drug users."

The older brother told us how he was trying to find the detained brothers in various detention centers and temporary isolation wards in Moscow and Moscow Region, with the help of lawyers.

"I was not permitted to see my clients from December 2nd, i.e. from the date of detainment, until the traces of the beating had disappeared,"

Nodar Duishvili, the Amerkhanov brothers' lawyer, said. He told us that the brothers were incriminated with Art.228, p.2 (possession of drugs with no intent of selling) of the Criminal Code.

"This accusation is absurd," he states. "It says that the brothers bought this drug at an 'unidentified time from unidentified people'. Such phrases are usually written in the indictment when the case is fabricated and drugs are secretly planted." In addition to possession of drugs, the older brother Murat Amerkhanov is incriminated for hooliganism and participation in fights. Actually, in November 2008 there was a big fight in the city park of Solnechnogorsk between local citizens and Caucasians with a few dozen participants. At that time the investigation suggested that Murat Amerkhanov was an instigator of the fight. But the case was closed and the charges against Murat were dropped. On December 1st, the day before the detainment, the old case against Murat was reopened.

"I told the criminal investigator that they probably needed the older brother and they should release the younger," lawyer Nodar Duishvili said. "The investigator seemed to agree with me, but the mechanism had been launched and he could not do anything."

When Murat was detained in Zaur Guliyev's apartment, he was asked when he had been in Tver and Novgorod Oblast last time. As the lawyers of Amerkhanov brothers found out, the December special operation against Murat and Yunus was associated with the November 2009 bombing of the Nevsky Express train. The report describes Murat Amerkhanov as an acquaintance of Pavel Kosolapov, a former Russian military man charged in absence for the organization of several terrorist acts, including the bombing of the Nevsky Express train in August 2007.

Soon after the first railroad crash of the Nevsky Express, Murat Amerkhanov was detained by FSB and then kept in a temporary isolation ward for several days. Since, according to his story, he knew almost nothing about Kosolapov, and was not able to tell them anything interesting, Murat was released.

In December 2009, it all repeated.

"I had to figure out whether the brothers were

connected to the bombing of the Nevsky Express train and I was making my own inquiry," lawyer Nodar Duishvili told our DOSH correspondent. "I spoke to many people and verified the available information as to where the Amerkhanov brothers had been from the November 25th through December 2nd, 2009. And I am sure, they have no connection to the acts of terrorism or the bombing of the Nevsky Express, neither to the first one in August 2007, nor to the second in November 2009."

It seems as if Murat Amerkhanov made an enemy in Solnechnogorsk. Maybe he did not share something with the representatives of business circles or the Solnechnogorsk law enforcement bodies?

Nodar Duishvili says that during the three months of detainment there had been no investigatory actions with the accused. No questions were asked neither about the possession of drugs, nor about the bombing of the Nevsky Express train.

The Amerkhanov brothers wrote complaints to all higher authorities. They appealed the law violations during their detainment. They complained that they had been beaten and that lawyers were not allowed to visit them. Their complaints received standard formal replies.

Nobody is going to bring a suit against illegal actions of the staff of law enforcement bodies.

This story is similar to the notorious "Whirlwind-Anti-Terrorism" of 1999-2000. At that time Chechen immigrants were detained, accused of possession of weapons and drugs, and efforts were made to beat out of them any evidence of involvement in terrorist activity. As a rule, such cases fell to pieces in court: evidence material was found to be groundless and the accused went free or got away with a suspended sentence.

It is the year 2010 now but the methods of law enforcement bodies and judicial authorities have not changed yet. No conclusions have been drawn from their mistakes hiding the broken fates of innocent people. No one is responsible, neither the investigators who frame up criminal cases, nor the prosecutors who approve "hyped-up" bills of indictment, nor the judges who stamp false arrests and judgments of conviction.



FLOWER AND FLAME

It is very hard to write about the problems of people with special needs (as people with disabilities call themselves now) because you feel that your writing cannot influence the "great brains" of civil servants, and, accordingly, no one is trying to change anything. Fortunately, there are a lot of people who are ready to help such children. I would like to tell you about a small-scale project which I particularly like because it is meant to unite the children who have psychological problems in connection with their traumas.

This project has a poetic name: Flower and Flame. There were many more participants in it than it was originally planned.

The organizers, Leila Yesmirzaeva, Fariza Mezhidova, Topta Zaurbekova, Yakha Gabaeva, Djambulat Djambaldinov, and Zulikhan Asukhanova, contributed a lot of positive energy into their activity. All of them were united by the desire to change something in the consciousness of these children. And they succeeded!

Movldi Tepsaev was shy from the very start, although maybe not only shyness made him close-lipped. Recently, so much has overwhelmed him that the physical traumas receded into the background. His parents divorced for some unknown reason. I do not dare to judge, but the question keeps disturbing me; what could have urged his mother leave and part with her son who was already struck with misfortune? We have written earlier (*DOSH Digest #4*) about the problems of Movldi and his charming Maren.

Later his wife left him. That same beauty Maren, whose discretion and wisdom surprised every-

body. How could it happen that Movldi was left alone with all his troubles? Of course, his devoted aunt Malika and friends are nearby. However, a simple truth is known to everybody: miserable are the ones who are deserted by their beloved, especially when they are young.

One has to learn to live with it. But how difficult it is! It is quite another thing when a young man during such tribulations is supported by communication with people capable to understand him. Such as the blind Adam, who was married several times, who wrote a book and gained life experience, or the psychologist Djambulat in whom one may confide. They see no problem even when attempting to draw, when Leila assuredly says: "You can do it." And he succeeded and drew a heart with a blue soft-tip pen. "It's a kind and responsive heart," he explained to me afterwards.

The project united young fellows who differ by age, place of residence, and the perception of life. When I visited the boys a week after the project started and saw them singing, without any shyness, it was so joyful and catching that I also started singing with them. Step by step both the young fellows and the organizers got to learn about each other.

During the project, it became known that Ibragim Kurbanov did not have a father and his mother was gravely ill. Everybody asked him about his mother every day. Ibrashka, as he was named by his new friends, apparently felt revived: he felt relieved from the awareness that he was not alone. And everybody warmly sympathized with Movldi Tepsaev, as his trauma was the most severe: a loss of both arms and a total loss of sight.

Moreover, Movldi was losing his hearing. Urgent surgery was required and money for the trip to the hospital was needed. All of us felt deeply for him, the more so that apart from restoration of hearing he had a hope inspired in him by someone who promised a donor's arm to him. The boys asked a lot of questions in connection with it: whether our religion accepted donorship, whether it was possible for businessmen to give money for a donor's arm, whether there was a clinic that could perform this operation, etc. The boys were very happy when Movldi received 50 thousand rubles from the A.-Kh.Kadyrov Fund. Now he will start to hear well again.

The boys' relatives and friends also participated in this project. A large group of people was involved, which is undoubtedly an advantage. The boys communicated with other boys and men with similar problems, but already hardened by life, who knew that not every one can be the darling of fortune always. They all received traumas during military operations.

These boys and others have many problems. It is not hard to imagine what a difficult life they have with such a lack of communication. The Flower and Flame project gave them the joy of communication. It was evident how the boys were returning to normal life, how their eyes flashed, and they started to smile again. "With all our hearts we thank all the organizers of the project," Zulikhan Asukhanova said. "We would like to believe that it was helpful to the boys. Still, we are concerned about their future life."

One of the boys said: "I received a lot here. We were happy and comfortable together. Of course we will maintain our relations, but it is a pity that the project ended. Is it possible to create a similar project for three years, with psychologists, like it was in this one, only it would be better to have an additional educational program aimed at people with specific needs, so that we could be trained to have a certain profession?" We would like to hope that organizations and foundations will undertake such a task. The Flower and Flame project gave these children hope and it is only natural that they don't want to lose it. When we were working on this issue, we learnt that Ibragim Kurbanov's mother died. I saw him, his eyes were filled with painful solitude. It is dreadful to think, how he can endure such a loss alone. If his friends from the project were now beside him, it would be much easier for him to cope with his grief.

NEWS DIGEST

NOVYIE ALDY: AN UNHEALED WOUND

February 5th, 2000 is one of the most tragic and bloody days of the Second Russian-Chechen War. Ten years ago a group of St. Petersburg OMON officers conducted a so called cleanup operation in Novyie Aldy, a village suburb south



of Grozny. According to the witness statements of local residents, during several hours OMON plundered, set houses on fire, shot the population, and raped women. By the evening, at least 56 people were killed in the village, none of them being a fighter, all being peaceful civilians; old people, physically handicapped, and women.

Several residents appealed to the European Court on Human Rights and the Court ruled that Russian Federation was guilty. Over the past ten years, nobody has been charged in court for the mass murder in Novyie Aldy.

MURDEROUS WILD GARLIC

Shamil Katayev (1991), Movsar Tataev (1988), Ramzan Susaev (1969), and Movsar Dakhayev (1991), four young men from different villages of Achkhoy-Masrtanovsky District of Chechnya, became victims of a special operation against fighters conducted during February 11-12, 2010, in a forested area along the border of Chechnya and Ingushetia, in the vicinity of the Ingush villages Arshity and Dattiykh.

Initially, law enforcement officials reported about the extermination of a large-size detachment of fighters and stated that there were no civilians among the victims. According to representatives of Memorial human rights center and Human Rights Watch, who succeeded to prove the identity of the victims and the circumstances of their death, the victims were civilians of Achkhoy-Martanovsky District. They reported multiple gunshot wounds in Shamil Katayev's body and a bullet-made hole in the forehead. His passport, cell phone and a permit to harvest wild garlic disappeared from his vest pocket. Movsar Tataev's body had three gunshots and several knife wounds both in the back and in

the groin area. Ramzan Susaev, as his relatives said, was killed by a shot in the chest. "His whole left side was swept by bullets, his back torn and the left hand broken, on the right side there was a gunshot wound". Movsar Dakhayev was killed by three shots in the back.

BOOK PRESENTATION

On December 19th, many high-ranking visitors, including politicians, the military, ambassadors, businessmen, and entertainers, gathered in Moscow's President Hotel for the presentation of a documentary book about Akhmat Kadyrov written by Alvi Karimov, a journalist and press secretary of the first President of the Chechen Republic.

"For twenty years I was close to the first President of Chechnya Akhmat-Khadji Kadyrov, so I had to tell the truth about him in a way so it could reach the younger generation," the author said, presenting his book.

According to him, "the idea of writing the book emerged after the tragic death of Akhmat-Khadji Kadyrov, when every day various mass media publications tried to underestimate the role and significance of Akhmat-Khadji Kadyrov in the history of Russia, his contribution to healing the situation in Northern Caucasus, to the war on terrorism and extremism, and to the return to peaceful life of many thousands of former illegal armed units members."

The value of the book and the essential role of Akhmat-Khadji Kadyrov in the modern history of Chechnya and Russia were emphasized by Chairman of the Chechen Parliament Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov, former President of Abkhazia Sergei Bagapsh, former Presidents of Karachaevo-Cherkessia, North Ossetia and Ingushetia Vladimir Semyonov, Alexander Dzasokhov and Murat Zyazikov, Vice Speaker of the Federation Council Alexander Torshin, Colonel Generals Valery Baranov and Vladimir Moltenkoi who used to be in charge of the federal troops in Chechnya, Deputy of State Duma Aslambek Aslakhonov, Deputy and singer Iosif Kobzon, and many others.

CHECHNYA AND INGUSHETIA MOURNED, RUSSIA CELEBRATED

Sixty six years ago, the Chechen and the Ingush people were exposed to a mass-scale deporta-

tion from their historical motherland to remote regions of Kazakhstan and Central Asia, together with the abolition of the autonomy, the Checheno-Ingush ASSR, which both nations had together at the time. The ethnic deportation of almost half a million Vainakhs (a collective name for the Chechens and the Ingushs), a special operation under the codename Chechevitsa, became the largest in the years of Stalin's repressions. In only one day 333,739 people were deported from Checheno-Ingushetia, of whom 176,950 people were loaded into military trains. Heavy snow on the 23rd of February slowed down the eviction. By February 29th, 478,479 people were deported and loaded into trains: of them 387,229 Chechens and 91,250 Ingushs. On February 27th, in the Chechen village of Haibakh located high up in the mountains of Galanchozh District, 705 of non-transportable local residents, old men, children and sick, were forcibly driven into a horse stable and burned alive; those who tried to escape from the stable were shot.

The oldest of the burned alive was 110 years old. A 30-year old woman, named Khesi, was lucky to escape the burning stable with her sons, twins Hassan and Hussein, born the very same morning, was shot with her newborns by machine guns. Meanwhile, all over Russia, as previously in the USSR, February 23rd is a holiday. None of the leaders of the present-day Russia who declare the country democratic and proclaim equal rights of all its constituent republics and citizens have ever pronounced a word of mourning or repentance on this day. Moreover, this year the main federal TV channel Rossiya showed a typical war movie featuring "Russian defenders" of the homeland dashing drenching "Chechen terrorists" with bullets. Obviously, so the viewer can know who the enemies of Russia are and in what way they should be treated.

UNFINISHED DISCLOSURE

"The murder of Estemirova is solved. The perpetrator of this crime is known to the investigation," Interfax news agency informed on February 25th referencing unnamed sources in law enforcement bodies of Southern Federal Area. According to the agency informant, search of the killer whose name is known is underway, as well as identification of those who commissioned this crime.

However, in his interview to Ekho Moskv radio, Oleg Orlov, Head of Memorial human rights center, stated then when his colleagues "contacted representatives of the investigation group, the officer denied knowing the name of the killer."



The human rights activist suggested that by naming a person connected to the murder "the investigators and prosecutors will be entering a zone associated with politics." Also, Orlov expressed fear that "political considerations could disturb the investigation group from thoroughly inquiring this crime."

TIKHOMIROV KILLED

On March 5th, Said Buryatsky, aka Alexander Tikhomirov, was killed during a special operation by FSB in the village Ekazhevo of Nazran District. He was considered to be one of the ideologists of the armed underground in Northern Caucasus.

"Tikhomirov was among six fighters killed on Tuesday in Nazran. His body was identified on Wednesday as part of the investigating action," an ITAR TASS source in law enforcement units of Southern Federal Area stated.

In the opinion of investigators, Tikhomirov organized a series of large-scale acts of terrorism, including attacks on ROVD building in Nazran, when dozens of militia men died, murder attempts on the Ingushetian President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, and the bombing of the Nevsky Express train in November last year.

FLASH VISITS

In early March high authorities of Russia focused their attention on Northern Caucasus. First, President Dmitry Medvedev visited Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachayevo-Cherkessia, two days later Vladimir Putin held a meeting in the Ingush capital Magas informing about financial aid to Ingushetia: over 43 billion rubles are planned to be allotted for its social and economic development until 2016. Both the President and Prime Minister were accompanied by the Authorized Representative of the President in Northern Caucasus Federal Area and Vice Premier Alexander Khloponin who, according to Putin, is assigned to the comprehensive program for the development of all regions in the area.

Russian Prime Minister said: "March 14th is the 240th Anniversary of Ingushetia's voluntary entering into Russia. Despite the complicated situation

in the republic, there are positive changes. The Russian Government will take every measure to support the economic and social sphere of the republic. Specific attention is required to the development of education, health care and sports."

8th OF MARCH: THE DAY OF THE DEPORTATION OF THE BALKAR PEOPLE

Another holiday in Russia, the 8th of March, is the day of national mourning for the Balkar people. Sixty six years ago, all of the Balkar people, as earlier happened to other nations of Northern Caucasus, by order of State Defense Committee were forcibly deported from their ancient native lands to remote regions of Kazakhstan and Kirghizia.

Fourteen trains carried 37,713 Balkar natives to their new settlements in Central Asia. After 18 days of travel, 562 people died of hunger, cold and diseases. Those who survived the trip and hardships found themselves in a fenced and thoroughly watched location. During 13 years Balkar natives lived in barracks under ordinary confinement. Absence without leave was considered an escape and entailed criminal liability.

Mitigation of the regime of special settlements became possible only after Stalin's death. Children under 16, veteran soldiers and terminally ill patients were the first to be released from special checks but were still not allowed to return back home.

NO PUNISHMENT FOR ASSASSINATION

On March 2nd, the Supreme Court of Ingushetia reduced the charge to the person convicted for the murder of Magomed Yevloev, owner of the oppositional website Ingushetia.ru. The court changed



the penalty of Ibragim Yevloev, former Head of Security Service of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ingushetia, from two years of colony settlement to two years of supervised residence.

On December 11th, 2009, the Karabulak Court sentenced Ibragim Yevloev to two years of colony

settlement on charges of part 2, Art.109 of the Criminal Code: "homicide through negligence, as a result of inappropriate professional behavior."

The International Organization Reporters Without Borders sharply condemned the decision of the Supreme Court of Ingushetia: "Coinciding with a state visit to France by Russian President Dmitri Medvedev, the Ingush Supreme Court ruling has highlighted the fragility of Russia's progress in human rights. Nicolas Sarkozy praised Medvedev's 'commitment to the rule of law, respect for the law, judicial security and defense of human rights,' but if Medvedev wants to show he deserves this praise, he must put an end to impunity for those who murder journalists and human rights activists in the Caucasus."

FINGERPRINTING FOR ALL!

Alexander Bastrykin, head of the Investigation Committee under the Prosecutor General's Office (SKP), proposed mandatory fingerprinting of all citizens living in the territory of Northern Caucasus Area, refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as sampling of DNA, which is supposed to provide a centralized record aimed at solving criminal cases.

Bastrykin's idea provoked indignation among all regions of Northern Caucasus and among human rights activists. It was not supported even by those deputies who are usually far from sharing liberal values.

Thus, Pavel Krashenninnikov, Chairman of the State Duma Legislation Committee, said that he shared "the concern of SKP chief with regard to the crime situation in Northern Caucasus Area," but he did not support the proposed methods. In his opinion, "fingerprinting registration and DNA sampling will not preclude the criminals from their intentions, whereas the rights of the population will be substantially restrained."

Lyudmila Alexeeva, Head of Moscow Helsinki Group, emphasized that "it is discrimination when a particular region is picked out and every resident is suspected, which is an unthinkable practice in a civilized country. The country should not be organized as a camp. Why do they plan it for Northern Caucasus, why not for Chukotka, for instance?"

The following day the SKP website posted Alexander Bastrykin's report at the Prosecutor General's board meeting featuring the idea of fingerprinting and genome registration for the entire population of the Russian Federation.

UNKNOWN CITIZENS OF A GREAT COUNTRY

Abdulla DUDUEV

"My husband took me by car to Pyatigorsk for a diagnostic study. We arrived in Pyatigorsk at around 3 or 4 PM and it was already too late to go to the hospital. That is why we decided to go directly to the hotel. He parked the car near a grocery store not far from the hotel. I went to buy some food. My husband came out of the car, gave me the car keys and but did not go to the store with me. When I returned to the car half an hour later, he was not there yet. I waited for him in the car for about six or seven hours, then made a call to my brother-in-law and he came to pick me up," said Makka Pliyeva, the wife of the disappeared 32-year old Ingush Mikhail Pliyev.

This mysterious disappearance of the Ingush resident who vanished without a trace in the center of the capital of the new Northern Caucasus Federal Area triggered a spontaneous rally the next day in the village of Pliyev. Among those who gathered there were not only the relatives of Mikhail Pliyev. That day at least sixty people blocked off the road demanding the return of their relatives who have been missing in the past few months.

The authorities decided to disperse the rally because no permit for it had been obtained. As a matter of fact, no permit



Magomed Mutsolgov, leader of the Mashr human rights protection organization

could be given since nobody prepared or formalized this spontaneous gathering of people.

"The Ingush OMON arrived to break us up, and there were also Russians among them," rally participants pointed out the details. "Their commander was Gireyev, Deputy Minister of Interior of the Ingush Republic. We were beaten with sticks, they shot in our direction, they took away our boys!"



People kidnapped by unidentified power structures and by unidentified armed people in Ingushetia and in other cities of Russia is perhaps one of the most painful problems of today's Ingushetia. When we arrived, it was the fifth day of the rally. In this of cloudy, rainy, cold weather dozens of people continued to stand around the fire in front of the Pliyev Administration, taking turns.

According to Makka Pliyeva, the chief of local Ingush militia deceived them. He said that her husband was not missing but had been detained at the Pyatigorsk detention center and advised the crowd to go away. However, when Mikhail's relatives arrived there, at first they were refused to enter, while the next day they were told that he was neither in that center, nor at FSB, nor at any other law enforcement body of Pyatigorsk.

The security cameras near the place where the Pliyevs' car was parked did not provide any help either. "There is a witness," Makka said, "who states that the husband was detained at a bowling alley. Though, I don't know why he went in there. Maybe, he went to a restaurant nearby?" It is a puzzle to her.

"He was engaged in construction," Zalovban, the mother of the disappeared Mikhail, told me. "He spent five years in Bashkiria with his family. He had a construction company there. This year he came to Ingushetia in order to build a house for my widowed daughter-in-law and her three children. Also, he was building a house for another brother. He brought his family overhere and decided to live here. Now I am left with eight grandchildren?" The sorrowful old woman willingly answered my questions in hope that journalists would be able to help her.

Another Pliyev, the 28-year old Aliskhan, disappeared on December 4th, 2009. According to his relatives, he was taken away at midnight by armed people in two Lada Priora cars. His relatives were unable to find out who it was, for what reason and where to he was taken. Rashid Inalov, a 22-year old student of Saratov Institute, who was returning home on December 25th, was taken from the train by two civilians who, as witnessed by train attendants, were travelling in the same train. Rashid's fate is still unknown, as well.

On the same day, December 25th, 2009, four people of Aina Adzhieva's family disappeared in St. Petersburg: her son Magomed Aushev (1988), two brothers Yusup and Yunus Dobrievs (1969 and 1971) and her 16-year old nephew Ali Djaniev.

"Their car was found several days later in St. Petersburg but there is no news of them for almost three months now," Aina said. "We wrote to every possible authority! We wrote to Ingush President, to Putin and Medvedev! It was useless. We stopped thinking about the disappeared and worry only about their mother who is almost at the point of death now," Aina said, unable to suppress her tears.

There are plenty of such stories that people can tell you here.



The people at the rally demanded: "It is our right to know where our kin folks are and what happened to them. If they committed any crime and broke the law, let them be judged by this law so that we could be able to visit them and see them!"

They were determined to continue their action until their relatives would be found and they demanded assistance from President Yevkurov in search of the disappeared.

In recent years Northern Caucasus became a somewhat bewitched spot. Citizens of this region may disappear at any time of the day or night without a trace. Enough words have been said. Now it is the time for action.

PURE NUMBERS

According to the data provided by Magomed Mutsolgov, leader of the Mashr human rights protection organization, 300 persons were killed in Ingushetia in 2009, among those are members of law enforcement bodies, fighters and peaceful civilians.

The number of kidnapped is 14, out of them 4 in St. Petersburg, 1 in Krasnodarsky Region and 1 in Mineralnye Vody. As of early 2010, the number of killed is 54 and 1 disappeared in Pyatigorsk.



Yunus-Bek YEVKUROV, President of Ingushetia:

NO RECONCILEMENT WITH CORRUPTION



Why is the number of accidental victims among civilians during special operations so high?

First of all, any war, no matter how hard we try to avoid it, is associated with unforeseeable losses, likewise, the proverb "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs" is taken from real life. When cordons are set out during special operations, every possible effort is taken by me to prevent the presence of onlookers within its zone.

Furthermore, I don't quite agree that these victims are always accidental. Sometimes they are declared to be such without any sufficient ground.

For example, the father of the young fellows who were killed during the special operation together with Said Buryatsky said that he had given permission to his sons to carry guns. But this operation is not a children's game. When this special operation was planned, it was known that a bandit was hiding there and that shooting would be inevitable. Special service prepared the operation appropriately. They arrived and his sons were running towards them with their guns because their father had allowed them to stroll

along the streets with pistols. What should be expected in such a case?

They say that people were detained illegally and that peaceful and harmful civilians were killed. However, if they wanted to kill everybody, they would have done so. Nevertheless, 18 men were detained and they are alive. This fact denies all unfounded accusations that everybody was killed during the special operation.

Let me remark that not a single woman or a child were killed in any house because all women and children were taken out from there before the operation started. It was not done according to the principle: "Women and children go out. Men sit at home and wait for an attack!" If men come out, it means they surrender. Yes, they were detained. When there are complaints of illegal detainment, I ask: "Were you detained?" - "Yes, I was, and my relative too, he is still detained!" - "Six more men were detained together with you, right?" - "Yes, but they were released!"

We have to explain to him: "Look, you did not expose yourself anywhere, that's why you were released. Out of eighteen people who came out only ten were detained. It means their complicity was confirmed. The others were released and it proves that the punishment was not indiscriminate, though not everybody is ready to acknowledge it. Everybody keeps accusing special forces of cruelty and no one is willing to say honestly: a misfortune has happened, we

During the recent visit of Vladimir Putin to Ingushetia I raised the issue of delays in the investigation of the cases of abduction.

are personally guilty, our children are guilty because we did not keep proper watch over something.

Some even endorse the stay of Said Buryatsky due to Caucasian hospitality traditions. Come on! Is it really proper in this case?

People at the rally in front of the Pliyevo village administration building demand, in case their abducted relatives are accused of

anything, to be informed about their fate and whereabouts and put them on trial in accordance with the law. Are these demands justified?

I must admit that out of eight abductions in 2009 three were undoubtedly performed by special forces because armored vests, helmets, and armored vehicles were used. Let's look at a typical case: someone was taken somewhere and disappeared. A criminal case was initiated based on this fact. Both the investigative committee and the prosecutor's office work on this case. However, such cases require certain time. We saw more than once that the investigation of certain cases can last for years. Still, we keep working on these issues and try to do whatever is possible.

Regarding the abduction of Aliskhan Pliyev, he was not on the list of bandit underground participants, yet he was abducted, most probably, by the law enforcement bodies.

Regarding the second Pliyev, the one who disappeared in Pyatigorsk, I personally have many questions. Why did he take his pregnant wife along with him in the car, where did he go? Yes, it is understandable. Everybody has the right to go anywhere. It seems he was supposed to meet with somebody there.

According to my data, his elder brother received a phone call from the investigator who told him to come with lawyers because his brother was at the detention center. Eventually, all turned out to be wrong. His elder brother conceals something, too. They spoke with him three times and asked him to tell the whole story, where it started and what his brother was doing.

Everybody keeps silent, no one explains anything. There are only demands: "Find him!" It is very difficult for the investigation to find the causes of the man's disappearance without the help from his relatives.

As Pliyev's wife told us yesterday, they went to the hospital for examination. They parked the car near the hotel where they wanted to



rent a room, she went to the nearest grocery store, her husband stayed near the car, and when she returned, he was gone.

The wife is telling one story, the brother is telling another story. Such contradictions are misleading, and hamper the search.

Of course, the misfortune occurred. But we don't know yet precisely what the purpose of the meeting was or the person he was supposed to meet with. The fact of Pliyev's disappearance is registered in FSB and MVD, the search is underway.

The people at the rally complain that they, women included, were beaten by militia by order of MVD Deputy Minister Gireyev and live cartridges were used to shoot in their direction.

First of all, there was no shooting, except in the air. Second, they infringed the law by holding an unauthorized rally.

Six of them were detained. Originally they were supposed to be detained for ten days. But my order was: after filling out official papers everybody should be released and be warned not to hold unauthorized rallies any more.

For this purpose they need to inform the village

administration and obtain permission. After this you are welcome to hold your rally. However, it is no good to spontaneously call the young people and provoke them for some activity against the authorities. And then they blocked off the road. On that day I invited them here. We were sitting and speaking together. And I asked: why do you need to block the road off? Move aside a little, spread out your posters, put your boilers and hold your meetings for as long as you like until we find the disappeared!

What do the authorities plan to do further in relation to the rally participants?

I sent relevant instructions to the district administration. I will start with punishing Head of the district and the village administration. They should not let the residents violate the law.

Should the administration have dispersed them?

Their goal is not to disperse or otherwise, the matter is totally different. Let these women stand there with their posters, let the whole world see that they are searching their children.

Does it mean that at least women are allowed to hold rallies?

Not only women are allowed. Men are not pro-

hibited either. But I must emphasize: the law should not be violated. Especially, I don't like it when they take fifteen-seventeen year old boys to such rallies. Mothers come out to rallies, sometimes fathers do as well. But why do they

Let these women stand there with their posters, let the whole world see that they are searching their children... Not only women are allowed. Men are not prohibited either. But I must emphasize: the law should not be violated.

bring teenagers? To provoke riots? Riots are initiated by teenagers. It is hard to expect self-possession on the part of militia since they are also very young men.

You said that last year there were several cases of people being abducted with the participation of special service.

I don't insist upon that they exactly were the members of special forces. However, the use of armed vehicles which bandit underground doesn't possess makes it possible to suggest they were special forces.

Does that mean that the interaction of authorities with representatives of federal power structures placed in the republic has its problems?



It used to be true to a certain degree up to recently. You probably heard that in 2009 I ordered to fight abductions by all means, even to open fire on those cars that refuse to stop by order of militia. Five cases were recorded when our people opened fire. The truth it is that no abducted people were discovered inside when those cars were searched. Sometimes we had to take rigid measures. There was one case when an illegally detained person was drawn away from Malgobek. The names of those who took him away were recorded in militia but no officers with such names served in that division. It turned out that they made use of borrowed or false documents as a cover. Two militia officers lost their jobs because they let the resident of the republic be abducted.

At present we have a better interaction with the federal structures. Once a month I hold a meeting with all power structures about abductions. We have a special focus on this issue. We set up a special group for search of missing people at the Investigation Committee at the Ingush Republic Prosecutor's Office. During the recent visit of Vladimir Putin to Ingushetia I raised the issue of delays in the investigation of the cases of abduction.

It is clear that such a situation did not emerge overnight or during your administration. What are its reasons in your opinion?

It may be so that you, like some of your colleagues, would prefer to hear something about

disregard of the law by the authorities, abuse of power by law enforcement bodies and the like. But I will tell another thing: the lack of basic family values education in the context of our mentality, customs and traditions gave rise to a serious problem among young people.

If our young people initially had a clear understanding of what is good and what is bad and what their attitude should be towards their Republic, their people, and law enforcement bodies, many of those who escape to the underground would act in an absolutely different way.

And of course, the shortage of jobs is highly destabilizing, I have always emphasized this. The young people need employment. Of course, unemployment existed even before, in the Soviet times too. However, the situation was more or less stable then, which made it possible to find a peaceful, reasonable opportunity to earn one's living in a much easier way.

Presently, many young people turned their back on our traditional ethnic and religious values.

Now the problem is still more complicated by the unwillingness of young people to work even if jobs are available. Many are seeking easy ways to earn money and this pushes them to commit crimes. You may see for yourself: to prepare an unmerciful act of terrorism with the use of a mined vehicle costs ten thousand dollars, just to mine a car costs seventy dollars. These young people immediately get an ample sum of money and that's it! They don't care until militia is lucky to catch them.

We should also recognize such a factor as harsh and sometimes unlawful actions by law enforcement bodies. Victims of such actions sometimes end up in a bandit environment. However, I should emphasize: in my opinion, we should be able to understand the law enforcement bodies when, in brutal confrontation with the criminals, they occasionally cross the line.

In addition to the lawbreakers, there is also the environment that encourages them. These are those who, being aware of what their brother, relative or friend is doing, still are hiding their crimes. For example, those people who gave cover to Buryatsky. Didn't they know who he was? Of course they knew! I am more than certain that the women who were the first to identify him could not be so ignorant of this fact.

If a strong moral counteraction towards such things existed in society, with an ongoing intense and honest dialog, with the development of judgment of what is taking place from the religious point of view, then Said Buryatsky could not have emerged here. He embraced Islam as recently as five years ago and arrived to disturb the minds here, where people have lived with Islam for two hundred years. Our people did not lose our faith even in the most dreadful years of deportation. Repressions could not break it down. Presently, many young people turned their back on our traditional ethnic and religious values.

How could this happen? Why have religious leaders and patriarchs lost their authority in the eyes of young people and can no longer influence the minds of the younger generation?

I don't think they entirely lost their authority. It became trendy to arbitrarily introduce something new. Perhaps, it is a rough comparison, but, for example, after the collapse of the Soviet Union a lot of stylish fashion trends in dress code appeared. A similar thing is happening here: it has become trendy to listen to those who arrived from abroad. Knowing that young people are credulous and receptive, special services made use of that sort of tactics.

Special services of what country?

No need to mention it. It is common knowledge who they are. When our young men return home after their studies in the Middle East, and I saw it with my own eyes, their speeches get more attention and greater enthusiasm than that what our old men say. Why? Because they show the picture in color while our old men keep showing the world in black-and-white.

In addition, a certain problem is the way older people, including my generation, perceive everything new and unfamiliar. For example, formerly you could pray only in headwear, now you can do it without. There are plenty of such novelties and sometimes they cause conflicts. We should live wisely through this period, without cries or abuses. Then life will normalize.

Many of your compatriots think that you have surrendered Prigorodny District. What is the main point of your agreements with the authorities of North Ossetia?

Nobody surrendered anything to anybody. Nothing has changed in our position which is

based on Article 4 of the Law on local self-government. The essence of my policy at present is to bring refugees back home and arrange their life there unconditionally, ensure their integration, and provide assistance in creating jobs.

Sure enough, there are those who still believe that Prigorodny District was sold. I often see such people. Try as you will, but you will never attain being good for everybody. I have no

The essence of my policy at present is to bring refugees back home and arrange their life there unconditionally, ensure their integration, and provide assistance in creating jobs.

intention to recall the stories of seventeen year ago. Today I have the authority here and my task is the realization of a joint program that we signed together with the authorities of North Ossetia. As a matter of fact, this program, in addition to various negotiations and communication, envisages the return and settlement of refugees. It was elaborated by our Government together with the Government of North Ossetia and approved by Putin. Part of these agreements is the Federal program for social and economic development of places of dense occupation of Ingush and Ossetian natives on the territory of North Ossetia.

How long will this program last?

If the program is approved this year, then it will last three years. The program cost exceeds 7 billion rubles. My primary goal at present is to bring back people, provide settlement for them and contribute to their integration into all spheres of activity.

Does it mean that the issue of territorial division is not on the agenda?

Such a question is not even discussed or raised.

How many refugees from Prigorodny District are there today?

There are different estimates. Over six hundred families can come back to their houses but do not for various reasons. The total figure is about 25-30 thousand people.

I discussed this issue today with the Parliament of the republic. It is necessary to explain to people and persuade them to come back to their

houses. There exist closed settlements where, under different pretexts, obstacles for coming back of refugees are created. We work on this issue together with the Administration of North Ossetia and the President of Russia.

Also, keep in mind the following issue. Unlike in 1992, when families of 5-7 members were leaving Prigorodny District, now not all of them are able to come back, only 2-4 relatives from one family. The total Ingush population in the district is not 70 thousand as it used to be, but about 50 thousand.

Should they return to their own houses that they had to leave?

Yes, exactly, to their own houses and without any conditions.

Do the authorities of North Ossetia agree with it?

Only to a certain extent. There are sanitary, closed zones in some settlements. Our proposal is to create separate sites for taking up residence by returning refugees in the same locality.

How do you plan to solve territorial issues with the Chechen Republic? Have you reached mutual understanding on this issue with the Chechen authorities?

I don't see any specific problems here. For 17 years we have existed within the present-day boundaries. Of course, there are plenty of so-called historians, both among Ingush and Chechen natives, who keep calculating where and whose ancestors were the first to settle in a particular place and who believe that the administrative boundaries between the two republics

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should be revised in one or another direction. I don't think this issue should be agitated, the more so that the two republics have already adopted the Laws on local self-government that fix the current boundaries.

The border between brotherly nations does not mean the existence of checkpoints and barbed wire. Everything will remain as it is now



unchanged: the same fields, the same meadows and the same visits to one another.

For the sake of future generations and to avoid any possible quarrels, it is better to fix the current boundaries. In this case, no third party will have an opportunity to cause trouble for us and play off one against another.

I have to ask you about your statement that caused a hurricane of resentment in Chechnya when you said that refugees from Chechnya brought prostitution, drug addiction and banditry to Ingushetia, that they should not have been allowed to enter your Republic, and that you regard it as a strategic error.

That interview did not contain anything against the Chechens, the Russians, the Kabardians or any other ethnic groups. If there is a wish, there is always a way to find fault with any word.

I was speaking about the problems of Ingushetia of that period. The tragedy in Prigorodny District occurred in 1992 and about 70 thousand refugees flooded the republic. In 1994 dead bodies from there were still being discovered and buried, refugees not yet settled. The Republic was only one year old and there was a lack of leaders at every level. This was the problem I was speaking about. And then a tragedy happened to our neighbors. The num-

ber of refugees exceeded that of the republic's residents. I repeat, not only the Chechens were among the refugees.

Why did I speak about a strategic error? I didn't mean the fact that refugees were brought in. I meant that all federal institutions and services of that period, being informed about an imminent war, had to get prepared for it. They had to create conditions and build settlements for refugees. They could have established special institutions for settling and servicing the refugees. What did the Ministry on Ethnic Affairs, food services and others do? Their mission was to estimate all possible consequences. This was the subject of that interview. Yes, I said it meaning that certain negative phenomena increased considerable amidst the confusion, but did I really mention the Chechens? In what way did I offend them?

Based on the available material and evidence, none of the judges is able to pronounce a more severe sentence to Ibragim Yevloyev (the convict) in accordance with the law.

Because I mentioned the mounting problems with refugees? But this could not be concealed since the republic was simply unable to solve these problems.

Those who need it will, of course, jerk out the words from the context and misinterpret them.

Did the president of Chechnya tell you anything about it?

No, I did not discuss it with him.

However, there is a persistent rumor that because of this some coolness has recently appeared in your relations with Kadyrov. Earlier both of you used to go to see one another often and could be seen together during Friday prayers at the Mosque of Grozny, while now nothing of the kind is happening any more.

If my relations with him get spoiled through someone's efforts, this will not be to the benefit of the two brotherly republics, neither to Chechnya, nor to Ingushetia, nor to the work done by each of us in our republics. No, there is no tangible coolness between us. Certain unresolved issues, including those connected with this article or some other things, may exist but we communicate with each other just as before.

Recently I have had no opportunity to go to Chechnya due to an enormous workload and, by the same reason, Ramzan has no time to get out to us.

When you were appointed president of the republic, your active service in Chechnya was discussed and it was mentioned that you were awarded Hero of Russia for that. However, there's nothing about Chechnya in your official biography. Can you clarify this point?

During the years of military operations, I was in Chechnya four times in the capacity of chief officer of the Privolzhsky military district units stationed in Khankala. I used to come to Chechnya as chief officer for two weeks during unit rotations and exercised control over the process. In this way, in the capacity of a military serviceman I went there on detached duty, by the way, like many other Chechen and Ingush natives.

I was awarded Hero of Russia officially, for a special operation that was conducted neither in Chechnya, nor in Ingushetia. It was not in the Caucasus region at all. But, even if someone wishes to reproach me for this, why should I deny that I struggled with terrorists? They say that it is militia that fights terrorism and it is no concern of mine! Should I tell Hattab, Basayev, Magas, and others that I'm their friend? This is not true.

We would like to know your opinion regarding the court trial of the Magomed Yevloyev murder. First, "an accidental shot in the temple", then an already mild sentence to the murderer is changed into a suspended sentence... This gives rise to many questions as to the objectivity of the judges.

As I told Yakhya (the father of Magomed Yevloyev), based on the available material and evidence, none of the judges is able to pronounce a more severe sentence to Ibragim Yevloyev (the convict) in accordance with the law.

First, it is obvious that none of those who had been in the car with Ibragim Yevloyev gave or will ever give any evidence against him. Second, I don't believe he killed Magomed Yevloyev premeditatedly. It is clear that a squabble occurred between them. I believe that confrontation turned into a fight and the firing was accidental. Judging by their intentions, it happened exactly in this way.

I don't make a secret of my appeals to the federal center regarding certain personnel questions. Moreover, as recently as last week I sent a letter to the Administration of the President of Russia in which I listed all corruption-related cases, murders and kidnappings.

Another question is who gave the order to make all the paperwork for detention post factum. Yet, it entails only disciplinary charges.

This fellow is guilty of serving in the militia and executing the order. I asked Yakhya Yevloyev whether he would calm down if Ibragim Yevloyev was sentenced to 15-20 years. He responded that no, he wouldn't. He needs something else. He understands that Ibragim Yevloyev is only a link in this chain and was no more than the executor of the order.

I can only repeat what I previously said: let's adhere to the law and not attempt to bite off more than one can chew. I cannot interfere. My goal is to put corrupted officials and bandits who kill people in prison.

Concerning corruption, people in Ingushetia discussed your statement at the meeting with students, when you were asked why you stopped raising the problem of corruption and your answer was that you would not touch this subject again. People started to guess the meaning of this and many concluded that you became a victim of corruption.

Of course, I was joking when I said it. I don't make a secret of my appeals to the federal center regarding certain personnel questions. Moreover, as recently as last week I sent a letter to the Administration of the President of Russia in which I listed all corruption-related cases, murders and kidnappings. I requested the federal center to transfer the investigation of all those cases from the jurisdiction of republican courts to the courts of North Caucasus Federal Area. Here everything is based on family and teip (clan) ties and those who must fight corruption are often those who feed corruption. Well, you know it is a disaster.

Do you really think there will be no bribes there?

They will need time to find the ins and outs! In any case, it will not be as easy as it is here.

I suggest taking corruption cases under control of a special investigation group.

I cannot speak for other regions, I will only mention Ingushetia: either for fear of the law, or at least by good conscience should we at last understand that it is impossible to continue in this way. Huge amounts of money are stolen, and this occurs in a region whose budget is 97% funded from federal sources. Honestly, something should be done about it.

Moreover, I keep asking representatives of public associations to give me suggestions concerning set-up of public control over budget spending of towns, districts and villages.

What is the unemployment rate in the republic today?

57% of the able-bodied population are officially registered as unemployed. For us it is a high percentage. There are no opportunities of employment for those who graduated.

You once spoke about your intention to ask the federal center to provide tax reductions for the republic. Is this associated with unemployment, too?

The idea is to leave the money collected from taxes in the republic. For example, this year we plan to collect about 2 billion rubles, and this money could be spent here on several projects. The scheme does not violate the law. Besides, we ask the government to reduce mortgage rates down to six, or at least to eight per cent.

Do you maintain relations with your predecessors, former presidents of Ingushetia?

I do communicate with them, make calls, congratulate and invite them to visit. That is the way it should be.

What was the greatest disappointment of your presidency?

There is no disappointment. There are some conclusions and assessments of the situation. For example, it turned out that elders, who are more mature and for whom it is natural to look into the eyes and say any truth either to a son, a neighbor or an official, in reality often do not tell the truth, some because of self-interest, others from being shy. Earlier, when an old man could openly tell anybody who he was and even use a stick to give a good hammering, everything was different. The absence of this



Two big portraits of former leaders of the Republic, Ruslan Aushev and Murat Zyazikov, can now be seen on the wall in the hall of the Administration of Ingushetia President.

It is a striking novelty for those who used to come here during the presidency of Zyazikov who, as the second President of Ingushetia, could not stand anything connected with the first President.

resulted in increased immorality among young people.

They lack the real understanding of life and the situation in society. When young people take no account of our ethnic mentality, traditions or cul-

However, the worst kind of disappointment is caused by the desire of officials of all levels not to live exclusively on their salary. When searching for a job, people calculate in advance the illegal profit associated with the offered position and not the size of the official salary. Certainly, this is far from being enough to knock me out of track, but I am not able to understand it. And I will never understand it.

ture, they cannot be respectful towards anybody. Today many of them accept the ways of life that are different from our customs, that of the Caucasians, the Vainakh, or the Ingush. To be more specific; it is common for them to hate law enforcement bodies.

What was it like in the Soviet times? Everybody knew that the road militia took bribes but this did not bring hatred. In some manner, it was transformed into jokes. Now it causes an overall bitterness which gives rise to violence.

The unworthy behavior of a few particular individuals should not change our attitude towards those who, at the risk of their life, execute their duties.

Though, on the other hand, when asked about what they want to be when they grow up, 70% of boys want to become militia officers. In some ways it is good and confirms that society has a real chance to overcome the hatred towards its law enforcement bodies.

However, the worst kind of disappointment is caused by the desire of officials of all levels not to live exclusively on their salary. When searching for a job, people calculate in advance the illegal profit associated with the offered position and not the size of the official salary. Certainly, this is far from being enough to knock me out of track, but I am not able to understand it. And I will never understand it.

There is the impression that some people have simply gone mad from greed. Even if such a person is building a house for himself, he will still try to steal something from it for himself. That is why the current situation is so difficult. Until we overcome this in ourselves, we cannot build our common house together.

As told to Israpil SHOVKHALOV
and Abdulla DUDUYEV

CANCER IN CHECHNYA: A NATIONAL THREAT

Markha ISAYEVA

As a rule, the attitude towards health care problems in Russia is much worse than in other developed countries. Chechnya is a vivid illustration of this severely disappointing picture in Russia: oncologic diseases and tuberculosis pose a national threat. Urgent action is required.

Among Russia's regions, Chechnya demonstrates one of the largest numbers of oncologic patients. In 2009, 1750 patients visited the Republican Oncologic Center, cancer related deaths amounted to 650, 33 children were registered with can-

cer, and 12 children died. It means that there were 45 children among oncologic patients who were officially registered.

Petimat Khamidova, Head of the Preventive Treatment Department of the Republican Oncologic Center, says that cancer treatment, which is a complex task by itself, is still more complicated due to the lack of reliable information. Patients apply for aid at the fourth, advanced stage of the disease, when it spreads uncontrollably. As a matter of fact, a diagnosis can be made earlier, if examinations and ultrasonography are done at least yearly. When the 1st or the 2nd stages of cancer are diagnosed, there are possibilities to offer help to patients.

Not every ordinary Chechen can afford examinations with the use of ultrasonography. Therefore, they delay their call to the

Among Russia's regions, Chechnya demonstrates one of the largest numbers of oncologic patients.

doctor, which has its consequences. People simply do not have enough resources for medical check-ups because of high unemployment and the need to support large families.

The Oncologic Center was opened in Chechnya recently. All the doctors have graduate degrees. The Center has two labo-





ratories: one cytological and one histological. Equipment for examination and treatment has been installed. There is already a 400-bed hospital, and a surgery department with 200 beds is planned to be built. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy are provided for patients in hospital No.1 of Grozny. Here, in Chechnya, all types of tests are examined on-site; there is

Among causes of death, lung cancer holds the first place, followed by gynecological disorders and stomach cancer, prostate cancer, osteosarcoma (bone cancer), etc. Among children under 14 years of age, congenital malignant tumors are common.

no shortage of medication, including those used for expected treatment. Though not all repair and construction works are completed and not all the equipment is installed, the officials at the Health Ministry consider progress to be visible. Khamidova says that they are able to cure skin cancer. Yes, the possibility to treat skin cancer without leaving the republic contributes to reduced deaths among this category of patients. However, the treatment of other categories of patients still remains problematic.

Among causes of death, lung cancer holds the first place, followed by gynecological disorders and stomach cancer, prostate cancer, osteosarcoma (bone cancer), etc. Among children under 14 years of age, congenital malignant tumors are common. Genetic heredity is an important factor in the above diseases. According to Khamidova, cancer was not earlier considered to be a hereditary disease, though now the role of genetics is recognized. The high morbidity rate in the Chechen Republic, in addition to the general cause (the consequences of war), is also caused by mini-factories, asphalt producing facilities, as well as influenzas, alcohol, and smoking. In the course of war campaigns, the environment was severely polluted. Factories cause damage to the ecology and to the health of the people, particularly when they do not have access to required treatment facilities.

The greatest flow of patients to the Center comes from Grozny and Urus-Martan Districts and the smallest amount from Shatoy and Nozhay-Yurt Districts. Petimat Khamidova emphasized, with certain regret, that deforestation in the course of the war campaigns, fires, unmerciful treatment of nature, bombings, and the use of various types of weapons contributed a lot to the spread of this awful disease.

There are children born with malignant tumors and, therefore, doomed before birth. Petimat tells me how difficult it is for patients from rural districts to come to the city for examinations and consultations, then to the doctor to obtain a prescription, and once more to buy the medicine. This procedure is so complicated because of the absence of oncologists in some regional polyclinics that have to invite part-time specialists. Luckily, the Republican Oncologic Center has enough specialist and all types of equipment, including a magnetic-resonant tomographic scanner, which is unavailable in other medical centers of the Chechen Republic and even in many regions of Russia. The Center has modern equipment and this, accord-

They acknowledge that all forces should be immediately mobilized to fight cancer in order to avoid possible disastrous demographic consequences for the republic.

ing to local doctors and officials, should significantly reduce the suffering of patients. Still, patients and their relatives, as well as doctors and officials at the Health Ministry maintain that the republic doesn't have a sufficient number of certified specialists. They acknowledge that all forces should be immediately mobilized to fight cancer in order to avoid possible disastrous demographic consequences for the republic.

Of course, the disappointing statistics take no account of thousands of Chechens who receive treatment in other regions of Russia, mainly in Rostov-on-Don and Moscow. Many of their relatives have to sell personal property to afford the expensive treatment. Almost a third of those who die of cancer are children.

MOSCOW METRO BOMBINGS

The acts of terrorism on March 29th in Moscow underground shocked the whole country. The storm of emotions left a lot of questions unanswered for those who closely observe the situation in Dagestan. Why did the fighters change their tactics? Why did they decide to kill peaceful civilians whereas earlier they were exclusively targeting law enforcement bodies? Why does the family of one of the female suicide bombers willingly talk to the press, while the authorities closed access to the relatives of the other one? Finally, why did the mass media in Dagestan write about the acts of terrorism much less than federal and foreign media did?

The family of Mariam Sharipova who blew herself up at the underground station Lubyanka is known to local journalists since long. Her father Rasul Magomedov turned to mass media in 2008 in order to attract public attention to the fate of his son Ilyas Sharipov who had been detained as a suspect in preparing a series of terrorist acts. "He is under pressure. During the court trial in Buinaksk, we saw that Ilyas had been beaten, his face was swollen, and he could barely walk. Later, he was taken to Khasavyurt and the lawyer did not have access to him for five days, he was threatened to be taken to Khankala if he did not refuse his defender", his father said. At the same time, he appealed to the prosecutor's office and requested to initiate criminal proceedings regarding five officers of the Department on struggle against extremism and criminal terrorism who had beaten his son. Dagestan journalists informed their federal colleagues about this case, however, none of them showed any interest in the news.

On the other hand, at present, the family of teachers from Balakhani fell in the focus of the Russian press.

DOSH correspondent Aida Gadzhieva visited this family



Mariam Sharipova was born on the 9th of July, 1982 in the village of Balakhani. According to her relatives, she was devout since childhood (like many other children of this village), at school she got excellent grades, and graduated from two institutes (she became a certified teacher of mathematics and psychology). She worked as a Deputy Director and taught informatics at the village school. When her father was asked what kind of person she was, he kept silence for some time, then began to show how she did repair work in their house.

"Let's see what she had done all by herself: wall-papers pasted, and whitewashing, flowers arranged. She succeeded in everything."

He showed me her room: a bed, several chairs, a chest of drawers, cosmetics and perfume on the table. According to Mariam's relatives, she cared much for herself.

"Even city girls don't care for themselves like Mariam did. Daily face and body masks, massages... She took special care of herself. She sold cosmetics, either Yves Rocher or Amway. She dressed beautifully, always chose refined and expensive things", Asya, her sister-in-law, said. "For me she was special. It was not a joy to me if Mariam did not see or taste something I bought or cooked. Everybody liked her. All of them are still shocked: it is not possible to imagine how such a thing could have happened."

Patimat, Mariam's mother, is resentful to have read what was written about them in Komsomolskaya Pravda:

"Journalists came here and asked a lot of questions. We answered one thing, while they wrote and showed another." "I nearly fainted when I read in the newspaper that, according to one of the versions, my son Anvar, who lives in Moscow, was an accomplice and gave Mariam a ride to the underground. How is it possible?! My son told me: "Mother, I lost such a sister, and what did they write? How could I bring her there and send her to her death!" He feels depressed.



Jennet Abdullayeva and her husband

But me, I lost the meaning of my life. Now, without her, there is nothing I'll ever need."

There was information in mass media that the second suicide bomber Jennet Abdullayeva, who blew herself up at the Park Kultury metro station, had come to see Mariam Sharipova. The mother said: "We have never seen her here, what nonsense!"

We were shown her desk at the school where she worked. A poster was hanging above the table with a portrait of Putin, the Spasskaya Tower and the text of the Russian Federation anthem. On the opposite wall, there was a portrait of imam Shamil. Colleagues mentioned that on the eve of her death Mariam was busy with the school website and worked on it with great enthusiasm in order to make it the best in the republic.

What could have pushed Mariam Sharipova to do such a thing? Her father answered contradictorily. On one hand he stated that his daughter had been an independent strong-minded woman, not yielding to any outward influence. On the other hand, he does not believe that she could consciously kill herself and innocent peaceful human beings. "It is dangerous to speak about possible versions. Maybe, she was kidnapped," he added without explaining who namely could have kidnapped her.



The work place of Mariam Sharipova

17-year old Jennet Abdullayeva was born in the village of Kostek of Hasavyurt District in Dagestan.

The journalists who wanted to talk with her relatives were told by the district administration that they should not go to the village, as they would not be allowed to enter the village and none of the locals would converse with them. Indeed, at the entrance to the old part of Kostek, obstinate reporters of one of the newspapers were met by members of the people's guard. Though they were allowed to come to the village, they did not succeed to get any details about Jennet. Having talked to Kostek residents, the journalists concluded that an investigative group from the capital had frightened them, forbidding them to say anything to mass media. Moreover, the relatives signed a non-disclosure agreement.

Some residents of Balakhani are of the opinion that the acts of terrorism in Moscow were directly tied with a special operation conducted the previous day in Makhachkala. To put it more accurately, they are the links of the same chain. The fact is: in the early morning of March 28th, a house in Makhachkala that belongs to Magomed Rasul Yakubov, head of Balakhani, was surrounded by law enforcement officers who expected the presence of fighters there. But only his wife, two sons, a nephew and the fellow villager Rasul Magomedov (father of Mariam Sharipova) were in the house. "When I came out onto the street, first of all I saw a lot of people in masks and with weapons, also there were tanks," Yakubov told. "I asked what had happened and was told they had information about two fighters hiding in my house. Among the surrounding people I recognized Ziyawuddin Ashikov, Head of Makhachkala MVD, who I got to know recently. I walked up to him and told him there were no fighters in my house, and if they wished they could check it. The chief officer answered that he believed my words, but immediately his colleagues started to dissuade him, telling not to trust me. However, Ashikov entered the house, followed by the rest of them, and made sure that no one was hiding indoors. At this moment my friend Rasul Magomedov called Svetlana Isayeva, chairwoman of Mothers of Dagestan human rights organization and asked her to come to my house. Svetlana Isayeva came with another rights defender, Yekaterina Sokiranskaya from Memorial. Their arrival changed the attitude of the militia men. Having failed to find fighters, they said that my junior son Hazkil was under search because he participated in a

mutual combat that occurred on the 22nd of September last year. I was surprised and answered that my son was not declared in search and was at home. Hazkil himself started to deny this information, too. Still, we were ordered to collect our things and they took me and my sons and nephew to the Kirovski ROVD. Then, I went with my junior son to the Sovetsky District ROVD, because a fight allegedly took place on the territory of that district. There, our fingerprints were taken. Several people came for identification; none of them confirmed that Hazkil had participated in the fight. We were released in the evening, and we returned home. Even now I don't know for what purpose all that was done. If they were interested in Hazkil, who allegedly had a fight



Her father Rasul Magomedov
Kasumkhan Gasanov - Photo by Aida Gadzhieva

with someone, why didn't they come earlier and why was my house surrounded? Regarding the information about fighters in my house, I don't understand where from they got it."

This strange detainment made the residents of Balakhani agitated, many of them hurried to Makhachkala to support their leader. On the same day, Mariam Sharipova went to Makhachkala together with her mother, and soon after that she disappeared. This information contradicts the data of law enforcement bodies that she arrived in Moscow by bus - it is impossible to reach Moscow by bus in 24 hours.

Meanwhile, there are rumors in Balakhani that the case with the surrounding of Yakubov's house, where her father stayed overnight, pushed Mariam to make the trip to Moscow. Allegedly certain "well-wishers" gave advice that she could lend a helping hand to her family, promised to arrange a meeting there with influential people, since their problems were not solved in Dagestan, despite all the efforts taken by her father to restore normal relations with the law enforcement bodies. The same people

handed over two videotapes to Mariam that supposedly were intended to confirm her story about the unlawful prosecution of her brother. But these "tapes" were bombs that detonated in the underground.

It is unclear from where rumors appeared and how much truth was in them. Rasul Magomedov said that it was nonsense. However, in all this doubtful information there are two undoubted facts. First, all villagers unanimously insisted that Mariam had not been fanatic and would not have blown herself up. Second, her relatives said from the very beginning and continue to say that in the morning of March 28, Mariam was in the village, and during the day came to Makhachkala, i.e. she could not have reached Moscow by bus where the terrorist act, as it is known, occurred early in the morning of March 29.

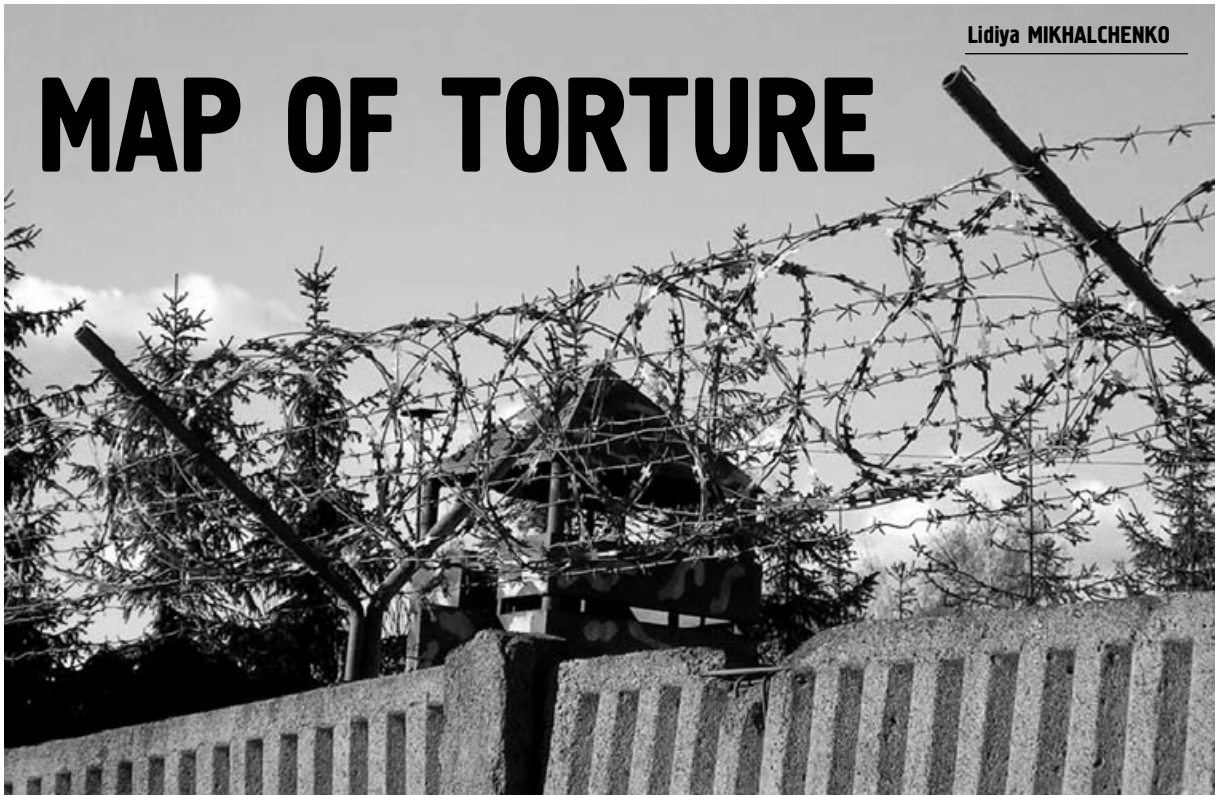
Soon after the terrorist acts, the Research Institute of National Problems of Education conducted a study aimed to analyze the reaction of the Russian society to the events of the 29th of March. "In general, the reaction is neutral," Kasumkhan Gasanov, Head of the Dagestan laboratory of the Institute, psychologist, said. "The attitude of the Dagestan press to the terrorist acts can be characterized as absence of reaction. Muscovites came to Dagestan starting from the first day after the attack, talked many times to the father of Mariam Sharipova and took photographs, but no similar activity was demonstrated by the local media. There were few original materials, mainly reprints. There is no understanding of what had happened. There is a feeling of discomfort, that the matter may give rise to unfriendliness towards Caucasians and cause some inconveniences, but there is no comprehension that it is a human disaster, perishing of people. And, in principle, there is no distinct condemnation of such acts. Their reaction is protective: we are not such, we are different. Probably, this can be explained by the fact that society is gradually getting accustomed to events in which there are elements of violence. We performed qualitative studies and interviewed many people. The results are discouraging. The people do not reflect over what is happening. Do you know what their attitude to the actions of suicide bombers is? They considered it their own choice."

The words of a Kostek village resident about Jennet Abdullayeva come to mind: "Let her be judged by Allah, not by you or me."

Photo: Sergei RASULOV / NewsTeam

Lidiya MIKHALCHENKO

MAP OF TORTURE



In mid-April, Said Toshkhoyev, a resident of Ingushetia, quoting his brother Mikhail and his countryman Islam Tsechoyev who both are serving a sentence in Omsk Region, reported that prisoners were forcibly taken to a medical penitentiary facility (LIU-2) in the settlement of Beregovoy of Omsk Region where they were subjected to torture.

According to Toshkhoyev, those who are actually in good health and do not need any treatment are brought there to be tortured and beaten. "I was once put in prison and I know what kind of victimization is possible in the colony towards Caucasians, especially Muslims. My brother was put in prison. He was sentenced to fourteen years, eight of which has already expired. We had the possibility to connect with him until he was moved to LIU-2 where people with AIDS are kept," Toshkhoyev said. He further told us that in this so-called medical establishment blood samples were drawn from prisoners by dirty syringes putting them at risk for infection and how prisoners were subject to humiliation. He added: "We were forced to do things that we are not able to do due to our mentality."

It seems that the human rights defenders to whom the relatives of prisoners resort to as the last hope are helpless in the Omsk case.

Raif Mingaliyev, Chairman of the Omsk Monitoring Commission on Public Control over Observance of Human Rights in Penitentiary, informed us that, according to his data, the above-mentioned facts do not correspond to reality. Also, he marked that, although his organization is aimed at defending human rights, his relations with colony administration and regional officials responsible for the observance of human rights in penitentiaries may be characterized as friendly.

It looks like those officials responsible for the protection of prisoners only dream of human rights. Alexander Stepanishev, assistant to the Chief of UFSIN of Omsk Region for human rights, declared that he knew nothing about abusive treatment of people in colonies. He denied the assertion that there was a danger of AIDS infection of the convicts.

He suggested that relatives of suffering prisoners should write letters to him.

"Laws are not invented by us; they are the same for all. The colony is located in Russia, hence, they are kept corresponding to the Russian Law," Stepanishev explained summing up his brief speech about the Chechens and the Ingushs in prisons under his jurisdiction not having it worse than anyone else.

Vladimir Shaklein, a human rights defender from Yekaterinburg who for several years has been trying to achieve observance of human rights in the colonies of Sverdlovsk Region, believes that the situation in prisons cannot be changed without attracting public attention to the state of human rights in prisons. However, too little information appears in the press. Therefore, as a consequence, Russian citizens don't think much about the problem until they or their relatives get in trouble.

Omsk and Yekaterinburg are far from the center. However, torture-aimed facilities are located within easy reach. Right here, in Moscow. Quite recently, relatives of the accused in the case of the 2009 Nevsky express train bombing reported about torture and psychological pressure exerted over their kinfolks for several months with the aim to "beat out" a confession in perpetration of the terrorist act.

Zelimkhan Aushev and nine men from the Kartoyev family, all residents of Ekazhevo village, were detained on the 2nd of March by law enforcement officers in the course of a special operation in the village. They were planning to capture Said Buryatski in Ekazhevo. Everything went according to the usual scenario: a leader of the underground was quickly killed and his dead body made an honest confession in all crimes of the accounting period.

The Kartoyev family lives in the neighborhood. The result is: seven killed witnesses and ten Ingushs are hostages of the system, and while the imprisoned are not able to take revenge for their brothers, on the other hand, they are quite fit for the prosecutor's office in capacity of expendable material.

Witnesses of the Nevsky express train bombing did not point out the Kartoyevs as those people who brought the explosives, nevertheless, the investigative committee was far from being embarrassed by this.

Both the lawyers of the Kartoyevs and their relatives are convinced that the physical and moral pressure over them would not cease until they sign their names on the documents suitable for the investigation.

The administrations of colonies and regional authorities often preclude visits by human rights defenders into prisons and their meetings with prisoners.

A source close to the investigation told us, under the condition of anonymity, about such methods that are practiced towards the accused: a bag is put over the head, the lips are glued together, the heels are beaten with a baton, or electric shocks are used. Or, some liquid is poured into the mouth, with threats to apply compulsive actions of a sexual nature and to film the sexual assault on video camera and place it on the Internet, as well as threats to send the video to relatives. Also, they threaten to give deadly injections.

The psychological state of the accused who have undergone torture is extremely aggravated, as stated by the above-mentioned source. Their health is at risk. However, they are afraid to complain to anybody.

The questions of what needs to be done for the sake of putting an end to such arbitrary treatment were discussed in Moscow by participants of the International Conference on Protection of the Rights of Prisoners "Public Control Over Penitentiaries. The Experience of Russia and the European Union." The event was organized together with the office of Russian Federation Ombudsman and with the participation of members of regional public commissions on monitoring over penitentiaries, representatives of President's administration, law enforcement bodies, Public Chamber, human rights defenders, and experts of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Human rights activists from Russia and other countries, as well as Russian officials, including representatives of the Federal Penitentiary Service, took part in the conference.

Noteworthy is the fact that public monitoring commissions started their activity in 70 regions of Russia in accordance with Federal Law on Public Control over Penitentiaries, in effect from 18th of June, 2008.

For the first time in Russian history the law allowed civil society an opportunity to watch over the state of those put behind bars, to try to improve their condition and attract attention to the cases of torture and cruel treatment on the part of personnel of the colonies.

Still, the Public Monitoring Commissions (PMC) faced organizational, technical and legal challenges already during the first year of their activity. Independence, which is the main prerequisite of their existence, is far from being achieved in full.

The administrations of colonies and regional authorities often preclude visits by human rights defenders into prisons and their meetings with prisoners.

According to the data of public monitoring, over twenty thousand prisoners are natives of Chechnya and Ingushetia. According to the data of UFSIN (Federal Penitentiary Service), this figure is 16 thousand.

After the Conference all the participants signed an appeal to President Dmitry Medvedev, Chairman of Government Vladimir Putin, Chairman of State Duma Boris Gрызлов, Chairman of Federation Council Sergey Mironov and Secretary of RF Public Chamber Yevgueniy Velikhov.

The appeal suggests improving legislation by extending the range of PMC control, so that human rights defenders could, at any time of day including weekends, make visits to prisons, as well as detoxification centers, mental hospitals, recruit reception centers, and other places of compulsory containment.

Also, the Conference participants proposed to put the administration of these institutions under obligation to respond in writing to written applications by PMC members within 10 days and to introduce changes into the law on the prosecutor's office obliging its staff to assist in the activities of such commissions.

Meanwhile, independent human rights advocates who are eager to relieve the destiny of prisoners are themselves detained in custody under any pretext. Thus, Alexey Sokolov, a community worker from Sverdlovsk Region and a colleague of Shacklein, got a prison term in a colony with strict security. Apart from other things he had filmed several documentary films about torture in Russian prisons and the punitive system sentenced him to five years, since in reality the system does not want to know the truth about what is taking place in the torture chambers.

I KNOW MORE THAN YOU DO: THIS IS MY JOB



The Council for the Development of Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights under the President of Russia met on May 19 to discuss the situation in Northern Caucasus.

Abdulla DUDUEV

The President of Russia stated that the residents of Northern Caucasus and the whole country "continue to be subject to attacks of terrorists." According to MVD (Interior Ministry) data quoted by Medvedev, "there were 544 crimes of terrorist nature committed in 2009 in Northern Caucasus. There were over 750 criminal attempts on law enforcement officers, of whom 235 died and 686 were wounded. In the past 12 years, 20 Muslim clergymen were killed, six were wounded. In 2008-2010, more than ten known journalists and human rights advocates were killed."

Lyudmila Alexeyeva is taking a closer look at Alexander Khloponin.

The President believes that "the enormous number of Caucasian problems is first of all associated with the unsettled social situation, with high levels of unemployment and an



extremely low quality of life." He also mentioned "the necessity to create programs for the development of the Caucasus Republics" and indicated a high level of corruption in Northern Caucasus, which, according to Medvedev, "is absolutely rampant and poses a threat, in essence, to national security."

Also, the President said that "the authorities at all levels should have a constant dialog with non-governmental organizations."

Ella Pamfilova, Head of the Council, supported the President and also mentioned serious problems. She said that "the arbitrary treatment of peaceful civilians by law enforcement bodies, such as the kidnapping of citizens, applying illegal methods of detainment and interrogation, blackmail and bribes for discharge of the detained and releasing the bodies of the deceased, plays into the hands of terrorists and is one of the factors enabling bandits to recruit young people and justify their criminal methods." In her opinion, "the prohibition to release the bodies of killed terrorists to their relatives brought about a dreadful business (especially taking into account the Caucasian and Muslim attitude towards traditional burial customs): law enforcement officers sell not only the bodies of killed terrorists but also photographs of dead bodies in morgues and photographs of their graves."

According to Medvedev, the high level of corruption in Northern Caucasus is absolutely rampant and poses a threat, in essence, to national security.

Ella Pamfilova was regretful to mention that "regional authorities lose to both the terrorists and other non-system forces in ideology and propaganda, in the good sense of the word, as well as in the struggle for the minds and hearts of people, especially young people. Therefore, new mechanisms need to be elaborated for public participation and regulatory activities regarding these processes."

Svetlana Ganushkina, Head of the Civil Assistance committee, remarked that "it is high time to find a solution" of the problem pertaining to "internally migrated people and former refugees, now already Russian citizens, forced immigrants, first of all in North Ossetia."

"There is no justification whatsoever of capital punishment exercised without a court ruling. There are laws and courts existing for the punishment of criminals. But in such cases the matter implies liquidation, namely, liquidation of the people who are merely "smelling of wahhabism," that is to say, of those who are adherents of an improper ideology, an inappropriate form of Islam. Accordingly, Islam, part of Islam, one of the movements of Islam is being transformed into a protesting ideology and radicalized with support of, including but not lim-

ited to, representatives of the authority," the human rights activist said.

"It's no wonder that fear arises among the population in Chechnya," Gannushkina continued. "This is not the kind of fear we witnessed when Chechnya was bombed, this is not a physical fear to be killed, it is another fear, similar to the fear of the Stalinist times, not just a physical sense of danger caused by flying bombs, this is a fear that enters the pores of an individual and becomes an integral part of his personality."

However, those who came to the Kremlin from Grozny did not agree with Svetlana Gannushkina. Thus, Adlan Dinaev, leader of the Chechen public organization Voice of the Mountains, said a few days later: "For some reason certain Moscow human rights activists consider criticizing regional authorities to be an indispensable part of human rights protection activity. Their approach is incomprehensible, sort of preferential. Why, for example, do they need to oppose the leaders (Ramzan Kadyrov and Yunus-Bek Yevkurov) of the two republics at a meeting with the President? What is the meaning of it? For some reason our Moscow colleagues consider interaction with power bodies to be wrongful from the viewpoint of human rights defenders. Meanwhile, all of us understand that solving urgent problems by virtue of civil society alone is rarely successful. We think that these problems can be efficiently solved only in tight connection with the power bodies."

The leaders of Memorial organizations in Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia described the situation in their regions to Dmitry Medvedev both in general terms and by providing particular examples and facts.

"The courts in a number of Northern Caucasus republics, I will not now name which ones, you also know it perfectly well, have completely discredited themselves. Something should be done about it," Pamfilova suggested.

Pamfilova was concerned with another painful topic. "The courts in a number of Northern Caucasus republics, I will not now name which ones, you also know it perfectly well, have completely discredited themselves. Something should be done about it," Pamfilova suggested.

"People should not have the feeling of being helpless when faced with cruelty and lawlessness," she said, causing a somewhat rigid reaction by Medvedev.

"I am categorically against such phrases because this will mean a collapse of the legal framework and a total disrespect of the court," the President said.

"Yes, there are people among judges who take bribes, people who are afraid to make decisions. But as soon as we start to talk about them being discredited, what is the way out? Should the courts be dispelled and new judges be recruited?"

Medvedev asked. "This happened in 1917. Therefore, in this context I would request everybody to be as correct as possible, whatever the courts are, these are our courts, and we are under the obligation to comply with their decisions," the President of Russia summoned.

As observed by the experts, this meeting of the Presidential Council was phenomenal because so many harsh words were told to the authorities straight in the face. Medvedev confessed: "Very tough words were said today. I am glad that you voiced them in this hall, directly in the Kremlin." He called it "the essence of this meeting." However, some consider it doubtful that any practical results will follow, as this Council (a Commission under Putin) has been in existence since 2002.



Lyudmila Alexeyeva, Head of Moscow Helsinki Group, the oldest human rights organization in Russia, does not put too much hope in the results of this meeting. Nevertheless, the President supported her proposal to set up a standing conference under the auspices of a working group on the problems of Northern Caucasus (apart from Alexeyeva, this group includes Vladimir Lukin, Ella Pamfilova, and Nikolai Svanidze), which, as suggested by Alexeyeva, could become an important step to promote collaboration between the authorities, law enforcement bodies, citizens, and human rights advocates.

Dmitry Medvedev immediately asked his Authorized Representative in Northern Caucasus Federal Area Alexander Kholoponin to "think about it, organize this conference maybe in Stavropolye or somewhere else. It should be a well prepared and a frank conference, on the one hand. And, on the other hand, it should be possible to make particular decisions at it. If it is to be held, then, of course, different authorities should take part in it, not only authorized representatives or the government, among which there should be law enforcement bodies, prosecutors, FSB, the militia, and the investigative committee, all those who work there. That is to say, there must be a dialog," the President instructed.

Human rights activists did not quite grasp the meaning of Dmitry Medvedev's phrase from his closing speech: "I know more than all of you here do, this is my job. I know very sad things. You should have no doubt about it." These words gave rise to various interpretations.



TABASARAN CARPET WEAVERS

Svetlana ANOKHINA

about carpets. Arif Suleimanov, Head of International Law Department of Dagestan State University, was talking about them in as an expert, ardently, like a football fan, and with inspiration, like a poet.

"Our patriots may disagree with me, but I would like to break the myth about the availability of Tabasaran carpets in the collections of the best museums of the world. Show me, where are they? Yes, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London has Azerbaijani carpets *Chelebi* and *Shah Safi*. The State Museum of Oriental Art in Moscow has the *Tree of life* Lezgin carpet. The Hermitage in St. Petersburg has the *Agul Sumakh* and even the *Zeikhur* carpet. But there are no Tabasaran carpets even in Dagestan museums, except for two or three of no particular value. All our ancient carpets (ancient are those more than a hundred years old) are already sold, while modern carpets are, in my opinion, of low grade. Believe me, I know something about carpets. I have a thorough knowledge of the entire process, from wool dyeing to washing the finished product. I know

how many knots should be woven by a woman-artisan per day in order to maintain the quality, what the seamy side of the carpet should be, and how colors play even on aged prayer mats. My colleague, an artist from Dagestanskiye Ogni, terribly resents my "attacks" on Tabasaran carpets. In his opinion, if, let us say, the carpets of traditional Lezgin style were woven in our area, then, they are ours automatically, and nobody is allowed to trench upon the sacred. Yet, indeed, various patterns were once borrowed from a different culture. That is

The fog was rising as we were still on our way. Wherever we were passing, either through Tinit, or Guvlig, or Khalag, everywhere there was the same milk-white haze spilled in the air. It was hiding the view of the foundations of houses, leaving visible only the roofs and upper floors. That is why it seemed as if all this was soaring in the air, growing from nothing, out of fancy, out of clouds. Near the spring-well two brave Tabasaran women were washing clothes, they stepped with their rubber boots over the jeans, trousers and shirts. Then they rinsed the clothes with ice cold water, threw them on the cement floor, and did the same again and again. Even the sight of them made our hands grow numb with cold. Two bull-calves were butting nearby. Behind them nothing could be seen. Behind them there was something entirely white, foggy and thick, and we immediately thought that the world ended here, behind the bull-calves.

However, we came here to see something quite the opposite, something vibrant, multicolored, warm, bright, and homely. We came to see how the famous Tabasaran carpets were made. While we were driving in the fog, we learnt a lot about natural dyes, enigmatic "knots" woven by carpet-makers, a special purple color extracted from shell-fish, and, in passing, about family law, Lev Gumilyov's theory of ethnogenesis, the Safavid dynasty, and again

Their hands and fingers streak so quickly that it is impossible to follow what exactly they do using this knife with a hook (called "k-ark-ar" in Tabasaran) and how they make knots. It might seem to be a simple operation, just to cut off the extra millimeters of thread with heavy old-time clippers *ubrushv*, but it is far from being easy. Here, as they say, a special skill needs to be applied.





why I gave a generalized name to my firm: Caucasian carpets."

In the first workshop in Tinit village it immediately became clear that nobody would permit us even to try weaving a small rug. Not everyone is able to comprehend how to do it properly. There stand enormous frames, multi-colored wool threads are hanging down, looking like New Year's decorations, and women artisans are sitting on a long bench in front of an emerging car-

The Tabasaran people are the only ethnic group in the Russian Federation that continues to be engaged in carpet weaving, the traditional type of ethnic craft. However, they are not that numerous, there are only about 130,000 Tabasarians.

pet. Their hands and fingers streak so quickly that it is impossible to follow what exactly they do using this knife with a hook (called "k-ark-ar" in Tabasaran) and how they make knots. It might seem to be a simple operation, just to cut off the extra millimeters of thread with heavy old-time clippers *ubrushv*, but it is far from being easy. Here, as they say, a special skill needs to be applied. The only thing that they allowed me to do was to tap with a heavy metal piece called *ryag* and looks like both a hammer and a comb. I started hammering humbly with one hand being afraid to tear or damage something because the work of several months would be

ruined. Aminat, she asked to call her Anya, who was standing beside, reassured me that everything could be learned. She said that she did not sit in front of the carpet frame for 25 years because she lived in Russia all that time, but when she returned she regained the skill at once. She belied that I could succeed in carpet weaving if my desire was strong. Arif disagreed with her:

"I don't think that any woman may become an artisan. A real artisan I mean. As for me, I don't employ, for example, a woman artisan if she does not have her own tools. Not only craft is needed for this work, it requires a special gift and that something that we are not able to name, that comes from the local air, from the land, from the mother's word in the native language. Yet, all this is passing away! Pakisat, tell us, at what age did you begin weaving? (Pakisat, blushing and smiling, pointed with her hand to a height of about 30 cm from the floor, meaning that she was quite a baby). At what age will your grand-daughter start? Not earlier than 12 years old? The Tabasaran people are the only ethnic group in the Russian Federation that continues to be engaged in carpet weaving, the traditional type of ethnic craft. However, they are not that numerous, there are only about 130,000 Tabasarians. Still, people start to turn away from what used to be a part of their living. As for me, I grew up among carpets, my mother, I dare to say, was the best carpet weaver in our village Ruzhnik. But my wife, also belonging to the Tabasaran people, is very upset that I made carpets my business. She complains that when she married me, she hoped that she would never have to deal with carpets anymore. And what does she see now around her? Bags with herbs and rootlets, dyeing tanks, threads after being dyed hanging on the trees, and in the middle of the yard there is always a carpet ready for washing! Perhaps, she would forgive me if carpets could bring money quickly and make us rich without extra labor, yet much time is needed for the production expenses to pay off."

When the women weave, it seems as if there is music in the air. The smell of wool makes you believe that you are sitting in the kitchen inhaling the smell of dried apricots, oven-fresh *chudu* with greens and the grandfather's old fur coat with long sleeves while the first drops of rain heavily beat on the roof house. The bright shawls that the women wear are obviously factory made and their chemical purple, toxicant pink and disgusting green come in dissonance with the natural soft and warm colors of the carpets.

"There is some sort of mysticism associated with these carpets. For example, the *zeikhur* pattern (this name comes from Tsakhur village)

Not so long ago, an American named Philip Shenk used to live in the neighboring village. He lived here for 8 or 9 years, and his wife Alice became a real Tabasaran woman.

is called *tapancha*, meaning pistols in Tabasaran. For a long time I was seeking a carpet artisan who could weave such a carpet for me. No one agreed to do it! People say that the symbols of war, blood and death are coded in this pattern, and there are also crossed swords in it. They believe that any carpet artisan consenting to weave this carpet will incur a terrible



disaster upon herself and her family. I finally found one woman who agreed. Only later I learned that prior to starting the work she went to a rural mosque and made *sadakha* by bringing prayer rugs as a gift to the mosque. In this way she diverted the disaster and damnation from herself. There is a great deal of paganism here, like so much paganism is in the so-called swastika, which many consider a fascist symbol, and therefore, they don't wish to own such



a carpet, not knowing that the swastika is an ancient solar sign. Regarding the *Safar* carpet, a newer legend is associated with it. There lived a young girl whose name was Safar, her beloved one, a shepherd, perished in a thunderstorm and she weaved a carpet in which there was a styled flock of sheep, a whirlwind, and a Cossack hat. And do you know how roses appeared on our carpets? Let me tell you. During the Caucasian War, the Russian soldiers brought shawls manufactured in Pavlovsky Posad to Dagestan. Those shawls had huge gorgeous roses blooming on them. And do you know why certain old-time carpets have asymmetric patterns? Simply a carpet weaver took the pattern by the eye, if not by memory. Therefore, the pattern was constantly changing and new details appeared."

"Look, here it is!" Arif pointed at an area on the carpet trying to show where the promised dragon should be. We could see neither the dragon, nor his crown, nor his boots. We blinked, peered and perplexedly exchange glances. The weavers frankly laughed at us. On the other hand, we immediately identified a peacock, although it had six extra legs. Perhaps it was not a peacock, maybe it was a turkey, just like the one sitting on a low roof of the house covered with fog. By the way, half an hour later we were

treated with its stuffed sister when we visited Ali Kerim, Head of Khalat village administration. Not so long ago, an American named Philip Shenk used to live in the neighboring village. He lived here for 8 or 9 years, and his wife Alice became a real Tabasaran woman. They also admired the local carpet weavers and even wanted to export knitted socks and anklets to America. However, something went wrong

When the women weave, it seems as if there is music in the air. The smell of wool makes you believe that you are sitting in the kitchen inhaling the smell of dried apricots, oven-fresh chudu with greens and the grandfather's old fur coat with long sleeves while the first drops of rain heavily beat on the roof house. The bright shawls that the women wear are obviously factory made and their chemical purple, toxicant pink and disgusting green come in dissonance with the natural soft and warm colors of the carpets.

because of bureaucratic protraction and negligence of the intermediaries who dishonestly swindled a naive US citizen. Unlike Philip, Arif supervises everything himself.

"Tell me, does anybody now know anything about Derbent madder? Indeed, it used to be a valuable raw material, as it produced such a deep, saturated red, highly rated even with Lyon weavers. Derbent madder was exported as far as to France. When in 1869 alizarin dye

was synthesized and became mass-produced, many dealers who made money on supplies of local madder went into bankruptcy. It is a hell of a job to collect the roots of this plant, dry and grind them, whereas artificial dyes are much cheaper. When I planned to revive traditional Caucasian carpet manufacturing, an idea came to me that merely the hand work of weavers and the original patterns were not sufficient, we would also need authentic dyes. We now grow the same madder on our pilot sites with a special relief of land. Small hills and shallow trenches are required. It is quite understandable that the price of a carpet into which so much labor is contributed cannot be low just in any way. Like genuine chocolate cannot be cheap. Like everything genuine, authentic cannot be cheap. However, people don't want to know this. That is why cheap imitations and not genuine carpets are hanging in the foyer of the Lezgin Theater."

The fog was getting thicker and it was getting dark, so we hurried back to Makhachkala. Arif was loading carpets into the truck while we were saying goodbye to Ali-Kerim and his wife. The turkey passing over from the roof onto the wall looked at us scornfully, whereas the sound of low-key tapping was coming out of the workshop where carpets were being weaved. Soon a new carpet will be spread on the floor of someone's apartment, and at once leather sofas, luxurious chandeliers, and miscellaneous small items will fade and hide in the corners having recognized the carpet as their new Chief.

Photo: Ruslan ALIBEKOV





TWO-HUMP MIGRANTS

I have never heard of camel breeding in Chechnya and I have never seen a camel in real life, maybe only on TV. Old people said that the camel was a highly respected animal in Arab countries. Recently I heard about a camel breeding farm in our republic and I went to Chervlyonnaya village where, according to rumors, they breed camels and, as it turned out, not only camels.

36 camels belong to *Chechenagroholding*, a company that was established in 2008. Its Director is Umar Guchigov. They specialize in cattle, sheep, horse, and camel breeding and poultry and fish farming. When they bought their first 20 camels in Astrakhan Region, only a few people believed that the camels would properly adapt to the Chechen environment. But they did.

In general, camels can adapt well to the ecological and economic conditions of dry plains and semi-arid zones. The animals have adapted perfectly well to the pastures of the plains in Shelkovskoy District. No diseases have been observed so far. They have had no offspring yet because camels produce offspring only once in three years. No special food or conditions of farming are needed, only in the winter time they need higher sheds. They are quite peaceful by nature, but if you make them angry, they can disobey and spit.

The word camel brings to mind images of deserts, caravans and thorny vegetation. However, this myth is destroyed immediately when you see these beautiful animals here in Chechnya. The plain steppes of Shelkovskoy District are covered with high grass and the animals like it. In winter

they get additional nutrition: hay, ensilage, or ready-mixed food.

Camels are rather tall animals but they look very elegant. When we approached the pasture I noticed locks of camel hair, as it was the time of shedding. Camel hair, as well as the meat, which is delicious according to experts, is of high value. Camel fat from humps has long been recognized as helping to treat many diseases. Surprisingly, camel fat can help cure intracranial pressure, which a lot of babies in Chechnya suffer from.

A newborn camel cub weighs up to 40 kg. The camel mother will feed the cub for several months before the cub becomes ready for an independent life. Modesty, fast adaptation, robustness, serviceability, and good looks are very attractive qualities of camels. I noted another specific quality, their peacefulness. When we visited the farm, camels were quietly grazing on grass in company with cows, horses, calves, sheep, and goats.

Chechenagroholding was awarded a silver medal at the Moscow international exhibition Golden Autumn 2009 for outstanding results. It is a very complicated task to restore what has been destroyed, and especially in animal production. The restoration of the republic includes not only beautiful houses and streets, but should also include programs of job creation, agricultural development, the creation of agro-industrial complexes and the infrastructure. Camel breeding has become one small portion of the enormous contribution that *Chechenagroholding* is making every day to the development of the Republic.

Maret ELDIEVA

CULTURAL REVIVAL DOES NOT MEAN CONSERVATION

Zulai BAGALOVA



Zulai Bagalova and Otto Latsis

Zulai Bagalova, People's Actress of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and Honored Actress of the Russian Federation, is celebrating her 65th birthday today. She added a vivid page to the history of Chechen theater by the bright and memorable images that she has created on stage: the Fiancee in *Bloody Wedding* by Garcia Lorca, Aset in *Goryanka* based on the play by Rasul Gamzatov, Zulai in the famous Chechen comedy *Bozh-Ali* by Abdul Khamid Khamidov, Naiman-Ana in *A Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years* based on the novel by Chingiz Aitmatov, Bela in a play based on the novel by Lermontov, and many others. According to her colleague Dagun Omaev, the name of Zulai Bagalova is associated with the Golden Age of the Chechen national theater.

The actress is known in the republic not only owing to her achievements on stage, the war has driven her to active social and charity work. Although Zulai Bagalova is not presently acting as much as before, she actively talks about the issues of theater, the moral state of the Chechen society, the preserving of national heritage, and social customs.

This is what she told our correspondent.

The theater of heroic and romantic spirit which I loved and to which I devoted 35 years of my creative life does not exist anymore. There are plenty of reasons, both objective and subjective, why it happened. After the dramatic events of the 1990s, when previous concepts and ideals were ruined and all guiding threads were torn, and after a long and cruel war in the Chechen Republic, the image of theater in general and of the Chechen

national theater in particular changed drastically. The theater of today has become a poster. The theater of today incorporates the political conformity that prevails in the society and it openly serves the interests of the crowd and the wishes of the authorities. I have always believed that theater should educate the nation, elevate its morality, and develop its aesthetic tastes, instead of serving as a cheap means of entertainment.

The war and all the events in our country and in the world that occurred over the last 15-20 years brought about the active participation of many people of art and culture in social life. This was the time of social and political journalism. For me, the LAM Center became a place where I could speak openly. But before it there was my participation in the opposition. It was impossible to act differently at that time, our people was intentionally pushed to the abyss, and something should have been done to prevent a catas-

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trophe. I knew back then that our efforts would be fail. Nevertheless, today, as never before, I clearly realize that all this has not been a fruitless waste of my forces and time.

Above all, it gave me an enormous life experience. A lot of "freedom fighters" succumbed to the temptation of power and turned into tyrants. Nowadays, it is very clear to me how painful it is to be honest with oneself and with the motherland.

We started to create the LAM Center during the first war. Politicians made their dirty deals and our efforts were aimed at saving of what remained of the devastated Chechen culture. Excited with the idea of rescuing our culture, we all started to gather in my destroyed apartment (as it was in the center of the city). The new independent public association was initially headed jointly by me and the poet Apti Bisultanov.

Though many people supported us, it was not an easy task to make the organization efficient.

During the first two or three years we implemented quite a few good projects: we sent several Grozny school graduates to study in Poland, organized the conference *Culture of Chechnya and Open Society Values* in Moscow (at the Andrei Sakharov Museum and Public Center), and recorded folk songs in 11 villages of Chechnya. A series of TV programs was prepared on the basis of the collected materials that were shown on the Chechen TV. In addition to folklore programs, we released two programs about prisoners in filtration camps.

Actually, the LAM Center started working efficiently in 1999, when we prepared and published the book *Chechnya: the Right to Culture*, together with the Sakharov Museum. Yury Samodurov, at that time Director of the Sakharov Museum, contributed a lot to our organization.

When the second war broke out, we had to move to Ingushetia where LAM was the first among Chechen public associations to start working in October 1999. In the following years, the Center had its base in Ingushetia, whereas the work was mainly conducted on the territory of Chechnya. We made our first trip to Grozny in early March 2000. The city was just opened and the military outnumbered the residents. We noticed dozens of checkpoints along the road to Grozny and in the city they were almost at every intersection. It was dangerous to move along the roads of Chechnya at that time, but our driver Israpil Gazikov never refused to make such trips.

We worked in Ingushetia too, both with refugees and representatives of Chechen intelligentsia. We regularly organized round tables for them in Grozny, Nazran and Moscow. And from time to

We could not stay away from political processes. Therefore, I consider the LAM Center anti-war efforts the most essential and I am proud that we made a worthy contribution into this noble affair.

time we were happy when we could launch a celebration party to honor distinguished people of Chechen culture and art.

I will only say a few words about our humanitarian activity. We distributed donations made by several sponsors, the first and foremost of them being Edward Kline, a former businessman and a public activist from the USA. By the way, he did not like it when his name was mentioned in connection with these donations that gave out of

his own pocket. Thanks to him we were able to help several hundred families and dozens of war invalids.

The essential point in the activities of the LAM Center during those years was, in my opinion, the restoration of the good name of the Chechen people. All of us know what image of Chechen natives dominated at that time in the world mass



Zulai Bagalova and
Edward Kline

media and public consciousness. One indicative detail of those years sank into my mind: the most primitive, uneducated and ugly people were especially selected for TV reports from Chechnya.

We were striving to show to the world all the best that existed in our people, the original Chechen culture, the beauty of folk traditions, and simply to show handsome, modern educated and thoughtful Chechens. Negative stereotypes of the Chechen people could be overcome only after demonstrating to the world the beauty and wealth of our culture. We implemented this goal through our LAM Bulletin that was distributed not only in Chechnya and Ingushetia, but in Moscow, the USA and a number of European countries. The availability of this bulletin made it possible to exert substantial influence over the public opinion in the Chechen Republic.

We could not stay away from political processes. Therefore, I consider the LAM Center anti-war efforts the most essential and I am proud that we made a worthy contribution into this noble affair. We organized conferences, includ-

ing international ones, we went around the whole world and many times appeared in Russian and foreign mass media.

We also did everything possible to overcome the inner Chechen political confrontation and many our conferences were dedicated to reaching this goal in particular. Finally, the LAM Center contributed a good deal into the development of civil

movements in the Chechen Republic. With our direct participation and support a number of new public associations were set up, including several human rights organizations. We also did a lot to improve the coordination of Chechen public associations that were based in Ingushetia.

The merits of the LAM Center are numerous. They got a larger recognition abroad rather than in Chechnya. Thus, the LAM Center was award-

Nevertheless, I continue my creative work. As a reader, I recorded several works by Apti Bisultanov, Musa Besultanov, Bana Gaitukaeva, and Akhmad Suleimanov.

ed the diploma of the World Movement for Democracy for its intense peace-making activity and human rights protection in the course of the war 1999-2000. This award was handed to us in San Paulo where a regular Assembly of this influential international organization took place. Nevertheless, I continue my creative work. As a reader, I recorded several works by Apti Bisultanov, Musa Besultanov, Bana Gaitukaeva,

and Akhmad Suleimanov. I also give comments and interviews to foreign radio stations.

Young people come to me to study acting as a genuine professional art. The craft of a dramatic actor is unique and it is impossible to learn it from books or by studying how the actors play on video. It takes years for future actors to learn the craft in the studios of skillful masters.

According to my observations, the contemporary generation of actors lacks the real school of professional craft.

According to my observations, the contemporary generation of actors lacks the real school of professional craft. I can teach them certain things but it will not solve the problem. One should work with gifted young people on a systematic and multi-sided basis. That is why I regret that we failed to implement the project of establishing a European Cultural Center in Grozny several years ago. We found potential sponsors in Europe and started selecting suitable premises in Grozny and people for participation in the project. However, the proposal was not accepted by the Chechen representation in Moscow, the head of which not only denied point blank the idea of the project itself, but refused to meet with our European partners who came to Moscow for this purpose.

Right now there is much talking about the revival of national traditional culture. However, in reality, no signs of this revival can be seen. The revival of something does not mean its conservation. Moreover, constant development is an indispensable condition of preserving any original culture. Chechen culture can only be preserved by our efforts to develop it, supporting all branches of art, including theater. Therefore, of paramount importance is the interaction between our culture and the best samples of world cultures, including the European ones.

Today we are not able to stop the overwhelming wave of mass culture that penetrates us in various ways, mainly through TV and the Internet. At the same time, we have no access to the best samples of modern European culture. If we had succeeded to accomplish the project of establishing a European Cultural Center in Grozny, this could have solved the problem, at least partially.

Our republican TV recently showed one of our pretty well known fellow countrymen who settled abroad but came back to visit his relatives. He ardently persuaded the residents of the Chechen Republic not to leave this country as

the city was blooming, life was being improved day by day, and the like. Still, he himself is not going to return from abroad and has no intention to move his children to Chechnya from Europe where they study. His entire support for the native culture was reduced to appeals.

Accordingly, I can well see the point why people are leaving. In the overwhelming majority of cases departure is connected with the desire to obtain a quality education or a well-paid and interesting job. People want to live in a normal way and since they fail here, they try to build their living somewhere else. Here is a recent example. My acquaintance, a girl who received a graduate education in Economics with a red diploma, who is very smart (by the way, she was raised very traditionally), tried to get employment as an accountant with a monthly salary of six thousand rubles. She was asked for a bribe of seventy thousand rubles for providing this employment. If she wishes to leave this place, who would blame her?

When we talk about the professionalism of young actors, we need to mention such problems as the knowledge (or more accurately, the lack of knowledge) of the native language. When we were young, we spoke the Chechen language well enough, although, like them, we did not learn it at school. Young people nowadays, basically, lost the culture of the Chechen spoken language and stopped to feel its internal harmony. Indeed, the richness of the language

Today, when I look back over the elapsed course of life against the background of befallen socio-political perturbations, I think of how important it is to understand the price of truth.

is propagated not only through its plentiful vocabulary, but also by a full scale of intonations, a slight shift of accents, and diction. There is a good deal of shades. In this context young people speak both Russian and Chechen languages equally bad, with improper usage and occasional mechanical mixture of Russian and Chechen vocabulary and norms of speech. The Chechen language possesses a unique imagery, but young people don't make use of this wealth. We, who were born in Kazakhstan and Kirgizia, succeeded in taking the culture of the Chechen spoken language over from the seniors, but apparently we have not been able to pass it over to the next generation.

Maybe, we should blame the mass culture that induces the younger generation to think and talk like they do in Hollywood movies. It is possible

that the negative impact was due to the absence of the native language classes in primary school, which we lost at the time of the deportation and could not restore until now. In any case, poverty and incorrectness of speech is especially unbearable in actors, as the text coming from the stage should serve as a reference standard of the Chechen language.

Today, when I look back over the elapsed course of life against the background of befallen socio-political perturbations, I think of how important it is to understand the price of truth. We were cheated a lot. Or rather we ourselves had been too credulous, which was the cause of many of our misfortunes. Tell the truth, the more often the better! It is insufficient to silently or inwardly love the truth. You should voice it. This will not make your life easier. Moreover, certain paths, for example, the opportunity to come to power, will be closed for you. Power provides, first of all, the material wealth, being an advantage for which one often has to pay the price of losing oneself and of being hypocritical every day.

In the course of time, I have obtained the reputation of a perpetual oppositionist. But this is wrong. My opposition is my desire to tell the truth. I value this possibility and I do not intend to give it up. In other words, my truth is my opposition. To tell the truth is necessary in the name of self-respect. But, on a broader scale, when I am asked about my attitude to power, they implicate my relation to the one who personifies this power, Ramzan Kadyrov. And here, it is similar to the scene in Shakespeare's King Lear, when the daughters of the king must publicly talk about their love to their crowned father. So, if you please, I am the junior daughter Cordelia who replies: "Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave my heart into my mouth: I love your majesty according to my bond; nor more nor less."

I don't regret anything. I worked hard and succeeded in a profession that filled my life with significance. There has never been a lack of attention towards me. I continue to be engaged in public activities that only increase the number of my friends. There are plenty of them, both young and old. I would have already been dead, had it not been for my friends and admirers of my talent who twice saved me from death.

Therefore, I know it for certain that I am quite at home with my people. I am among people whom I love and who love me. I will remain with them till the end of my life.

Recorded by Edilbek KHASHMAGOMADOV

THE HEART OF THE AKSAKAL COULD NOT SUSTAIN

DOSH wrote several times about the tragedy of the Makhmakhanovs, a Chechen family from Kazakhstan. In March 2007, hundreds of drunk pogrom-makers, accompanied by Kazakh police, attacked the family that gathered for a weekend in their father's home in the village of Kazatkom of Alma-Ata District. Three of the Makhmakhanov brothers were murdered. This attack was followed in the next two days by attacks on the houses of local Chechens in the neighboring village Malovodnoye.

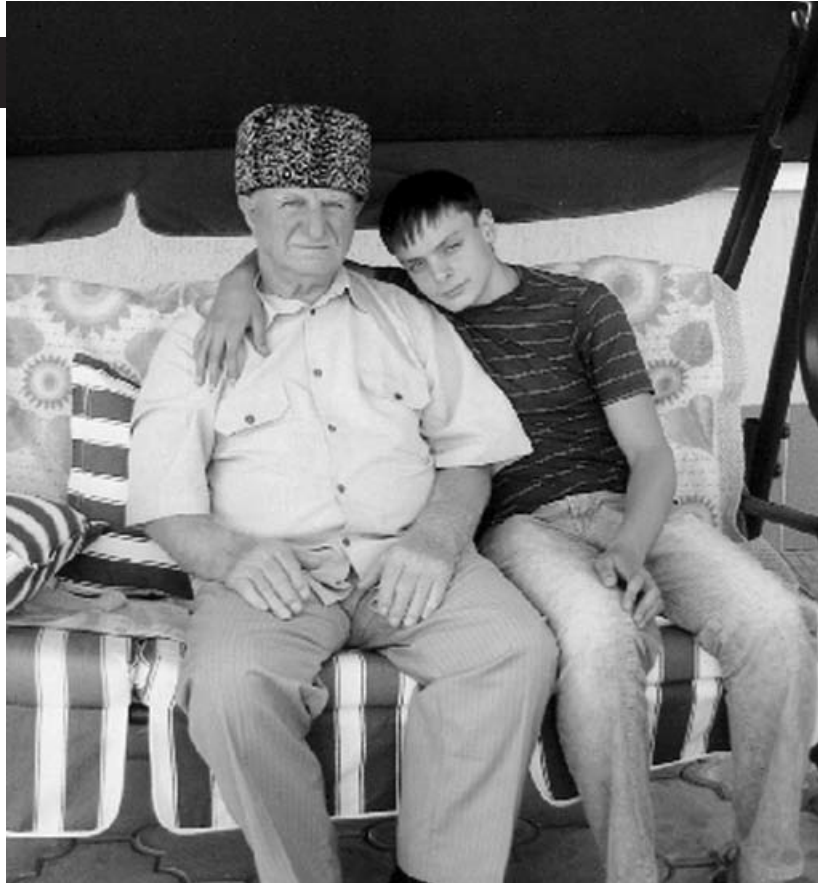
In 2008, DOSH released a documentary film about these events (Controlled Pogroms). We showed the film in Moscow, Oslo and Brussels. Last year we planned to show it in Warsaw, at the annual OSCE conference, when Kazakhstan was due to take chair in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Kazakh delegation led by president Nazarbayev's adviser tried in many ways, but mainly through one of the Makhmakhanov brothers who was present at the OSCE discussions, and succeeded in cancelling the presentation of the film. Not wishing to spoil an idyllic picture of inter-ethnic harmony in Kazakhstan at such a representative forum, these gentlemen assured Makhmakhanov that the president did not know about the events, promised to report everything to him and insisted on carrying out of an impartial investigation of what had occurred.

Days and months passed. None of the above promises given almost a year ago have been fulfilled by the Kazakh authorities.

On May 24th, 2010, Elsa Makhmakhanov, the father of the murdered brothers, passed away at the age of 79. As a child he learnt of hardships and suffering. At an early age he lost his parents, at the age of 14 he lost his Motherland together with his native people as a result of the 1944 deportation, and found himself in Kazakhstan.

He worked in the mines in the north of the republic prior to becoming an animal farmer and later becoming the best in the region. He taught his fourteen children to appreciate work. He earned numerous certificates of merit, diplomas, medals, and other awards. The highest rank of Hero of Socialist Labor was



Elsa Makhmakhanov with one of his grandsons

not awarded to Elsa Makhmakhanov for the only reason that he was of a wrong ethnic origin. But it was of no interest to him. He worked on land with a thrilling feeling of love and devotion. The land gave him inspiration and strength. He considered the land of Kazakhstan his second Motherland where he continued to live after the exile was over. His life instantly lost its meaning and value when the old man saw his children murdered before his eyes and he was unable to help them.

Elsa Makhmakhanov was a cheerful person. Nevertheless, his worthy old age was faithlessly crippled. He could not survive such a treachery by his second Motherland and such an insult on his dignity and "yakh" (the Chechen code of honor).

Two years ago, when we recorded an interview with Elsa Makhmakhanov for our film, at one point he fell silent for a while and then he said that his life had become a mere existence. "Seeing through the window what was happening there, and me being unable to help the sons!" It was the local police who did not allow him to help!

From April 23rd through May 12th, the Parisian theatre La Maison des Métallistes ran the play by the French playwright Stefano Massini *Non reeducable* dedicated to Anna Politkovskaya. An interview with the French actress Mireille Perrier who played the role of Anna Politkovskaya will be published in the next issue of DOSH magazine.



théâtre-rencontres
ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA
NON REEDUCABLE
MIREILLE PERRIER



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