

FIRST CAUCASIAN INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE

WORD

DOSH

DIGEST



FORGIVEN BLOOD

During the period of August 28, 2010 through March 9, 2011, 225 blood vengeance conflicts were settled in Chechnya.

ISSUE #9

A MESSAGE FROM PRISON

Our editor's office received another letter from prison, this time from Mekhdi Timerbulatov, who is serving a life sentence in Colony № 18, located in the Yamalo-Nenetsky Autonomous District. The letter from his mother, Saidat Timerbulatova, in which she described the tragedy, which came upon her family, we published in the issue №3(29)2010 of DOSH.

Below are excerpts from the letter of Mekhdi Timerbulatov. Upon Mekhdi's persistent request, we publish his other letter, addressed to the President of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov, in its entirety and will send a copy of it to the Administration and Press Service of the President of the Republic.

Whether the leader of Chechnya is able to satisfy the request for help of the Timerbulatov family will be conveyed in the next issue of our journal.

Editor in Chief
Journal Dosh
Israpil Shovkhalov
Moscow, Russia
From Mekhdi
Magometovich
Timerbulatov,
Kharp village Ik-18
Yamalo-Nenetsky
Autonomous District

Dear Israpil Shovkhalov!

<...> I have been sentenced to a life term in prison for a crime, that I did not commit. That is, I signed empty forms, after being tortured, and after my relatives were pressured, and on condition that they would be released.

When a person is placed in a situation, when death becomes desirable, he will sign even his own death sentence, let alone a blank form, which I was forced to sign, after my loved ones were humiliated and severely mistreated. Particularly unbearable was their abuse of my sister. What that feels like can be understood only by someone, who has experienced something similar himself or whose loved ones had to undergo such abuse.

After that three of my relatives, those who were tortured, tried to complain about this outrageous lawlessness. And were abducted. I have appealed to the state authorities of the Chechen Republic and the Russian Federation on the fact of their disappearance. But all of my appeals were answered with mere formal replies (as it often happens to many Chechens in similar circumstances).

A year ago I wrote to the President of the Chechen Republic RA. Kadyrov, but his chancellery also sent me a formal reply, something about my request having been

sent to the Prosecutor's office of the Chechen Republic.

<...> I ask you to publish my appeal to the President of the Chechen Republic RAKadyrov in your journal in the form of an open letter, since the authorities of the Republic have failed to take action during the past nine years. They have done nothing to search for my relatives, nor for the people who are to be blamed for their disappearance. Thus they are intentionally covering for the employees, who are to be blamed for their disappearance. I hope that my appeal to the Head of the Chechen Republic will open his eyes on these cases, and that the law enforcement officers, responsible for such violence, will bear fair punishment under the law of the Russian Federation.

<...> Attached to this letter is my appeal to the leader of the Chechen Republic dated February 1st, 2011 (three pages long), as well as the response that I received from the Administration of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic (one page long).

I kindly ask that you return the response from the Administration of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic.

May Allah protect you!

*Sincerely,
M.M. Timerbulatov*

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We all saw from the videos on Youtube, that on December 11 the Moscow police found itself on unfamiliar ground, completely different from the "Dissenter's Marches". When young men, who happened to be passing by the Manezh Square and were unfortunate enough to be of Caucasian origin (moreover, there were Russian nationals in their group as well), were beaten up right in front of the OMON officers, it became more than just frightening. Policemen hid them under an ambulance, taking on the blows, intended for the Caucasians.



AN ORGANIZED TRAGEDY

The total expulsion of the Chechens and the Ingushes from the land of their ancestors took place on February 23, 1944.

In 1937 30 out of 75 candidate members of the Regional Committee of the the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks were repressed in the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic; 20 out of 28 secretaries of district committees; 17 members of district executive committees; 192 workers of rural organizations, not counting common workers.

According to the archives of the NKVD USSR, as a result of three mobilizations, 17 413 people from the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic went to the war front.

Stalin personally entrusted Beriya with the total deportation of the Ingushes and Chechens. From the archive documents:

From a telegram to comrade Stalin from L. Beriya, dated February 17th, 1944: "The preparations for the operation of expulsion of the Chechen and Ingush people are almost finished. After the introduction of certain adjustments, 459 486 people subject to expulsion have been registered, including those residing in the regions of Dagestan bordering with Checheno-Ingushetia, as well as in the city of Vladikavkaz. Considering the scale of the operation, as well as the particular properties of mountainous regions, it has been decided to execute the expulsion, including the mounting of people on echelons, within eight days... Departing over 300 thousand people in three days. The expulsion of the remaining 150 thousand people from the

mountainous regions will take place during the following four days.... The mountainous regions will be blocked beforehand... 6-7 thousand Dagestanis, 3 thousand Ossetians, as well as Russian rural activists will be involved in the expulsion...."

From a telegram to comrade Stalin from L. Beriya (22.02.1944): "...The expulsion will begin at the break of dawn on February 23rd of this year. It is planned that the regions concerned will be sealed off in order to prevent the people from leaving the territory of the villages. The population will be asked to gather, one part will be sent to gather their belongings, while the other will be disarmed and delivered to the places of embarking..."

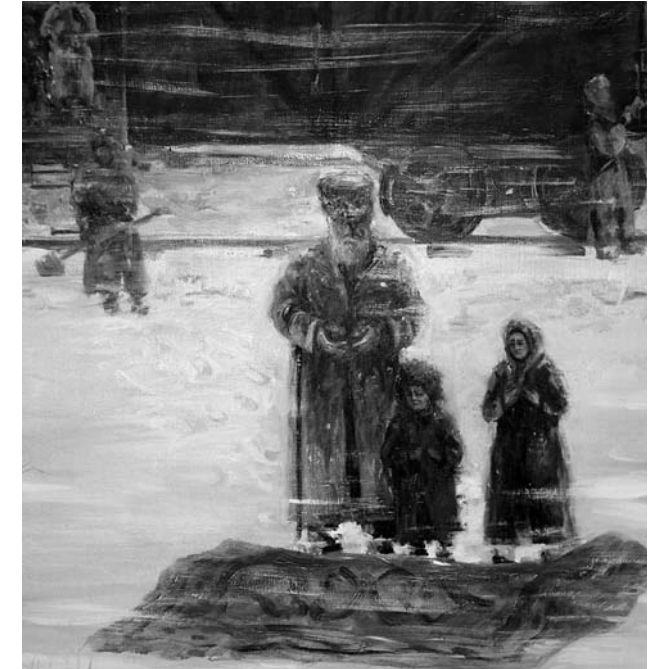
Note: People were taken directly from their homes and given one hour to pack their things, the sick and feeble, resistant or possessing any kind of weapon (dagger, hunting rifle...) were shot on the spot. Upon realizing that it was impossible to complete Stalin's order - to remove the inhabitants of the Chechen village of Khaibakh of the Galanchozhskiy region within the specified time frame, despite the bad weather conditions and mud-locked roads - L. Beriya ordered to destroy the entire village without a trace. On August 22nd, 1992, that is 46 years later, an inspection report was drawn up of the place where the inhabitants of the former Galanchozhskiy region of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic were massacred during the enforced expulsion of February 1944. It was determined that 700 inhabitants of the Khaibakh village were burned alive. The lists of victims have been formed... The Commission believes the mass extermination of the people of Khaibakh to be an ascer-

tained fact. It recognizes it to be genocide, and the culprits of this atrocity - criminals, which are to be handed over to the court ...

By the autumn of 1944 they began stripping the Chechens and Ingushes of their military decorations, withdrawing them from the frontline, and placing them either in camps, or in places of settlement for "Caucasian traitors", as they were presented to the local residents, under the control of special command posts, deprived of the right to freely move about the country.

According to the records of the division for special settlements of the NKVD USSR, between 1944 and 1948, 144 704 exiled Chechens and Ingushes died, including: in Kazakhstan - 101 036 people; in Uzbekistan- 16 052 people in six months of 1944; 13 883 people in 1945.

After the expulsion from their homeland was complete, two Decrees of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were issued - the first on March 7, 1944 "On the liq-



uidation of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the administrative arrangement of its territory" and the second on March 8th of the same year "On the awarding of honors and medals to the employees of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs and State Security". The highest honors were awarded to 290 people, starting with L. Beriya, and medals to 369 people.

Outrage against the Balkar people

The whole world knows about the Belarusian Khatyn. However, there is still a "Chinese wall" of silence around what happened in the Cherek region. Meanwhile, what happened in the villages of the Cherek gorge, in Sautu, Glashevo, Mukhol, Ogary, Cheget, is a hundred times more scary: in Belorussia the atrocities were committed by the enemy, the fascists, in this case - by our own. From November 27 until December 5, 1942 several hundred civilians were shot and around 500 houses were burned down in the Cherek region of the Kabardino-Balkaria Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic by the squadron of captain Nakin of the 11 Division of the Internal Troops of the NKVD...

By the summer of next year the Republic's commission drew up acts for 373 victims (95 men, 123 women, 155 children) and for the property of 365 aggrieved families. These documents had one particular feature: all that was committed was ascribed to the

"German fascist occupants and their collaborators." By collaborators they meant the "Balkar bandits". Meanwhile, the German troops appeared in the Cherek gorge several days after the departure of captain Nakin's squadron.

In the spring of 1944, on the day of the official liquidation of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, which coincided with the International women's day of March 8th, the Balkar people were totally and violently expelled from their land. Why? Among other things, they were blamed for the burning of villages in the Cherek gorge.

L. Beriya came from Grozny to Nalchik and started the expulsion of the Balkar people. There were a lot less of them than that of Chechens and Ingushes, and the operation was complete within twenty-four hours. By March 17 a report of the Administration of the NKGB USSR and the Directorate of Transportation of the NKVD was already ready: "Fourteen echelons have been loaded, 14 echelons are on their

way (Orenburg railway - 9 echelons, Tashkent - 5 echelons). A total of 37 773 people have been loaded onto the echelons. The migrants are headed to the Frunzenskaya district - 5446 people, Issyk-Kulsky District - 2702 people, Semipalatinsky district - 2742 people, Alma-Ata District - 5541 people, South-Kazakhstan District - 5278 people, Omsk District - 6621 people, Akmolinskaya District - 5219 people, Dzhalal - Abad District - 2650 people, Pavlodar District - 2614 people."

In exactly one month, on April 8th, 1944 a Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was issued on the "Resettlement of the Balkar people, residing in the Kabardino-Balkar ASSR, and the renaming of the Kabardino-Balkar ASSR into the Kabardino ASSR", which was immediately followed by a Decree on the awarding of the Kabardin people, that distinguished themselves during the expulsion of the Balkar people. Honors were awarded to 22 people, medals "For bravery" to 14 people.

It's still the same crowd on Manezh Square

The new year of 2011 started in the capital of Russia with mass arrests of Caucasians. These events were a development of the mass disturbances, which took place on **December 11**, 2010 on the Manezh square in Moscow, when nationalists gathered to participate in a memorial event in honor of "Spartak" fan Egor Sviridov, who was killed in Moscow on December 6 in a fight with several Caucasian natives. The memorial event escalated into street fights, beating up of Caucasians and clashes with the OMON.

Nationalist campaigns continued on **December 15, 16 and 18**. Apart from Moscow, the disturbances engulfed several other cities of Russia.

On the night of **December 31** hundreds of people of different nationalities gathered on the Red Square in Moscow to celebrate New Year's. Many of them were detained by the police. On the first day of 2011 the GUV of the Russian capital reported that 250-300 people had been detained, some of whom were from the Caucasus.

As the employees of the Caucasian knot were told by some of the participants of the events - natives of Ingushetia and North Ossetia, the policemen often refused to introduce themselves to the detained or explain the reasons for their arrest.

On **January 11** the police was already arresting the representatives of nationalist organizations, suppressing yet another attempt to hold an unsanctioned demonstration on the Manezh square. According to various sources, from 10 to 100 people were arrested. The next memorial events of Sviridov - also accompanied by crackdowns and arrests - took place in Moscow and St. Petersburg on **January 15**. 19 people were detained in the capital, 22 - in St. Petersburg.

The video address of a Dagestani, Ramazan Utarbiev, one of the partici-



pants of the fight, in which Egor Sviridov was killed, is available on the video blog of the "Caucasian Knot". R. Utarbiev, who is now on the wanted list, talks about the details of the fight, and states that he is ready to turn himself in, after he is guaranteed a fair investigation.

Abuse of relatives of insurgents in Ingushetia

In the Ordzhonikidze village located in the Sunzhen region of Ingushetia three young men were detained by security forces. On the evening of **December 30**, 2010 unidentified men in masks approached the house of the Pliev family in armoured vehicles and cars. They searched the Pliev brothers Magomed and Akhmed, as well as Adam Khamkhoev, who was visiting the Pliev family. After that their heads were covered with bags, and all three were taken away in an unknown direction.

On **December 31** the Pliev brothers were released. The young men said that they were tortured. Adam Khamkhoev was released only on **January 3rd**. He told the employees of the "Caucasian Knot" that he was tortured and beaten.

The Secretary of the Security Council of Ingushetia Bekhan Atigov called the torture allegations "insinuations", but added, that in case the beatings were confirmed by a medical expertise there will be an investigation.

Migration within Chechnya

On the evening of **January 14** armed men in camouflage entered the residence on Mayakovsky street in Grozny and demanded that the residents - forced migrants - evacuated the rooms that they now occupied. The eviction began on **January 15**. 96 families were forced to leave the premises of the residence, in which they had been living without registration.

The authorities of Grozny justified the eviction by the fact that the persons being evicted were registered in various other regions of the Republic. The administration of the Staropromyslovsky region of Grozny stated, that even though the persons were evicted from the residence, their rights had not been violated, and that these families had settled in Grozny just because they had grown accustomed to living at the expense of the state.

On **January 18** the eviction was suspended, however it was again resumed already on the 20th. At the same time they started inhabiting the house with new residents. Human rights activists from the HRC "Memorial" learned that the new residents were newcomers from the town of Argun, who were also evicted from two multi-storey buildings in their hometown, which were to

be inhabited by people, whose houses had been torn down in November of 2010, in accordance with the plan of massive reconstruction of the city. According to the Chechen authorities, 102 evicted families lost their homes in the town of Argun.

Forced eviction and housing programs are carried out in at least three residences in Grozny. According to the HRC "Memorial", from **January 14 to 21**, 62 families, many with children, had been evicted from family residences in Grozny. Thus, as a result of forced "migration" a total of at least 164 families were forced to leave their homes in Argun and Grozny.

The terrorist act in Domodedovo Airport: A twenty year old suicide bomber entered the airport unhindered.

On **January 24** a terrorist attack with the use of a suicide bomber was organized in the Moscow "Domodedovo" Airport - the biggest out of all attacks that have ever been committed in airports all over the world, if judging by the number of victims (37 people were killed and 124 were injured).

In the course of the investigation it was established that the self-detonation was committed by a twenty year old inhabitant of the Ali-Yurt settlement of

the Nazran region of Ingushetia, Magomed Evloev. On February 8 his brother and sister were arrested, as well as a twenty-three year old resident of the Ali-Yurt village, Umar Aushev. Later on, a fourth suspect in the organization of the terrorist attack, a resident of Ingushetia Bashir Khamkhoev, was also arrested.

The responsibility for the attack was assumed by one of the leaders of the insurgents in the Northern Caucasus Doku Umarov, who declared the explosion to be a special operation against the regime now in power.

The information about what was going on instantly reached Internet blogs and social networks, rather than TV news channels and radio stations. Bloggers coordinated the work of volunteers, who transported the people stuck in the airport to Moscow free of charge, as well as the delivery of water and coffee for the injured and their families. Detailed information as well as eyewitness testimonies of what was happening in the airport right after the attack, is available in the materials of the "Caucasian Knot", including the pictures and videos from "Domodedovo", which give you clear understanding of the atmosphere in the airport that day.

After the terrorist attack in "Domodedovo" the President of the Russian Federation fired the Chief of Transportation of the Ministry of

Internal Affairs of the Central Federal District, Andrey Alekseev. The Chief of linear control of the airport, as well as two other officers were dismissed as well: the Deputy Head of the "T" Directorate of the Economic Security Service and the Head of a division of this Directorate. The Deputy Head of the Service, Chief of the Directorate "T", has received a warning about his insufficient professional adequacy.

The personnel reinforcement process did not affect Chechnya

The resignation of the President Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Boris Ebzeev was related to the "personnel reinforcement of the of the administration of the regions" and the lack of "significant results". Chechnya was not affected by this process.

On February 26 it became known that Dmitry Medvedev accepted the preterm resignation of Ebzeev, whose powers were to expire in 2013. Rashid Temrezov started acting as ad interim Head of the Republic. On February 28 Medvedev introduced the candidature of Temrezov for consideration by the National assembly of Karachaevo-Cherkessia.

On February 28 President Medvedev proposed that the Parliament of the Chechen Republic reelect the current Head of the Republic Ramzan Kadyrov to the post of Head of Region. The members of "United Russia" proposed the following candidates for this post to President Medvedev: the Head of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov, the Head of the Grozny municipal region Shaid Zhamaldaev and the Mayor of Grozny Muslim Khuchiev. It is noteworthy that this list completely coincides with the one submitted to President Vladimir Putin in March 2007.

P.S. On March 5, during an extraordinary session of the Parliament, the deputies of Chechnya unanimously voted to vest Ramzan Kadyrov with the powers of the Head of the Chechen Republic for the second term.



Kabardino-Balkaria: TERRORISM INSTEAD OF TOURISM

Kabardino-Balkaria is at the risk of becoming the epicenter of the armed conflict in the Caucasus. The situation there has escalated, and the increase in the number of tourists, coming to spend their vacation in the vicinity of Mt. Elbrus has proven to be unsafe.

On the evening of February 18 three people died as a result of an attack on a minibus with tourists in Kabardino-Balkaria. All of them were tourists from Moscow. The next day the cable tramway "Azau"- "Stariy Krugozor" on Mt. Elbrus was blown up. According to the "Elbrustourist", the destruction of the cable tramway was caused by strong gusts of wind. On the evening of February 19 a car wired with explosives was found on the Cheget meadow. 50 tourists were evacuated. The Head of the Administration of the Khasanya village Ramazan Friev was killed on the same day.

On February 20 the authorities introduced the counter-terrorism operation regime in the Elbrus and Baksan regions. On February 22, as a result of an armed clash of the special forces

with the insurgents on the passage between the Baksan and the Chegemsky gorges, five soldiers of the special forces were wounded, one was killed. At the same time, information about the liquidation of the insurgents was not confirmed.

On February 25 there was an armed assault on two traffic posts, gunning of the Federal Security Service Directorate and the blowing up of an FSB Sanatorium in Nalchik. In the course of these events a policeman was wounded. On February 27 the counter-terrorism operation regime was introduced in a part of Nalchik, as well as in the populated areas of the Chegemsky and Cherek regions.

Plenipotentiary Envoy of the President to the North Caucasus Federal District Alexander Khloponin, who arrived in the Republic on November 21, insisted that "tourists should stop being admitted to the region, and those who are already here should be evacuated". According to the data of the Russian Union of the tourist industry, people have started giving up

their plans of spending their vacation in the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria. On February 28 the citizens of the Elbrus region sent President Dmitry Medvedev a collective appeal, in which they asked him to raise the ban on the entry of tourists into the region.

It was in these circumstance that an organization called "The Black Hawks", which positions itself as being Anti-Wahhabi, asserted its existence. In a video address posted on the Internet "The Black Hawks" declared that they are ready to use terror against terror and threatened to kill the families of the insurgents, as well as the insurgents themselves.

On the night of February 5 to 6 a group of unknown persons in Nalchik threw Molotov Cocktails into the yard of the relatives of Astemir Mamishev, who is now on the Federal wanted list as a suspect in a series of resonant murders, including the murder of Mufti Anas Pshikhachev and a law officer of the Federal Penitentiary Service Albert Altuev. Later on, the residents of the house found a threatening note from the "Black Hawks." On the night of February 25 to 26 a hand grenade exploded in the yard of Mamishev's parents. The same thing happened to the relatives of another suspect in various infamous murder cases, Azparukh Shamaev.



A HOUSE ON SALE IN ALI-YURTA

Our correspondent Murat Malsagov paid a visit to the home village of the "Domodedovo" suicide bomber.

When the residents of the Ali-Yurt village are asked about the Evloev family and their son Magomed, they switch to a whisper, or try to end the conversation all together: something like that they don't know anything about them at all.

At the school which Magomed went to we were told:

- Who hasn't been here yet! We are tired of answering questions about him. He left our school six years ago, and we haven't seen him since. He was an ordinary child, average in his studies, but had never been called to the Principal's office.

When Magomed disappeared at the beginning of autumn, his parents were regularly visited by close relatives, mostly from the Evloev family line. They were sympathetic and waited for news along with his parents.

Magomed left home on the second day after the divorce with his young wife. According to the rumors, he divorced her because her relatives were against the hijab that he made her wear. When she came to collect her things from her ex-husband's house she was no longer wearing it.

Magomed's parents, as well as Magomed himself, are characterized very positively by their neighbors, however none of them know what he was engaged in, and also, they sincerely hope that the forensics are wrong and that it was not their fellow villager that blew up Domodedovo.

Did his parents know about the path that their son had chosen? Some believe that they did know and that they tried to persuade him against it, but he did not listen to them. Everybody feels sorry for the elderly father of Magomed - he is a very good person. And those who try to accuse him of all the deadly sins must

not forget about the eternal theme of fathers and sons. Besides, it is no secret that the Aqsaqals (white beards, the old and wise of the community) have lost substantial ground and influence in the Caucasus.

Mukhazhir Evloev did not have kids from his first marriage. He married Rose, Magomed's mother, already in his middle-age. Rose, a teacher at a local elementary school, is also spoken of very well here. Many fellow-villagers brought their children for her to tutor. She did not charge much, despite the fact that the family had an average income and lived in an old brick house. Children were very fond of her, she knew how to find her way with each one of them, and they enjoyed their classes greatly. She quit her job at the school on February 1, by writting a formal notice of resignation.

But when Magomed's sister and wife started wearing a hijab may villagers began to avoid the Evloev family.

Why are young boys destroying themselves?

The answer is incredibly simple:

"There aren't enough jobs" - say the experienced, wise and respected local residents, fellow-villagers of the Evloev family.

The sad truth is that young, healthy guys can't find use for their strength, they become subject to mockery, since in many families it is mostly women that end up working. The latter have problems that are no less severe: they have no safe place to leave their kids while they work. In the 18 years of the existence of the Republic, which has the highest birth rate in the country, not one kindergarten has been built. In fact, many kindergartens, which were built back in

the Soviet times, in times of severe deficit, have now been privatized.

One of the female residents of the Ali-Yurt village told us that her two brothers, 24 and 20 years of age, are unemployed. Her husband does not work either.

- Our family has been left alone, nobody cares about our problems, - the woman told us. - If you ask for help all you hear in response is: "And where are your relatives?". My relatives are also unemployed, and even if they had jobs, they have their own families to support.

Of course, there are a lot of problems in the Republic, as in the whole country for that matter. Corruption is holding ground. More often than not, work is given not to the qualified, but to those, who have connections.

During our trip we met a young man who works in one of the ministries of the Republic, gets a pretty high salary (for this region) - 15 thousand rubles, but is planning to quit.

- I am tired of doing other people's work! - he explained his impulse.

The Republic of Ingushetia is the only region in the Northern Caucasus that doesn't have a youth newspaper. When the activists from the Youth Parliament and Youth government raised the issue about the need of a youth newspaper, the official, who was designated to deal with this issue, offered them to publish a newspaper using their own resources.

- If this attitude towards us and our problems doesn't change, we will simply abandon our activities and sit at home doing nothing, - said the upset activists.

It will be good if they go home, and not take a wrong turn somewhere else...

AN INCONVENIENT RESOLUTION

On February 17 the European parliament adopted a Resolution "On the Rule of Law in Russia", which contains several critical remarks on the insufficient compliance with the law in our country.

Among other things, the document certifies the lack of independence and impartiality of the judicial institutions of Russia, using the example of several lawsuits and trials.

The European parliamentarians voiced their concern about the verdict in the Khodorkovsky-Lebedev case and severely criticized the arrest of the opposition politician Boris Nemtsov on New Year's Eve, after his participation in the rally on the Triumph Square. Furthermore, according to the opinion of the deputies, reflected in the document, the murders of Anna Politkovskaya, Natalia Estemirova,

Stanislav Markelov, Anastasia Baburova and Sergey Magnitskiy have up until now still not been properly investigated.

"Violations of Human Rights, civil rights and the rule of law have become common in Russia. Corruption and injustice have forced 300 thousand people to leave Russia in the past year alone. The Russian authorities are introducing unconstitutional laws and orders", - stated the Estonian MEP Kristiina Ojuland, speaking on behalf of the Social Democratic fraction and in support of this Resolution.

If Russia does not react in a constructive way to the document adopted by the Europarlament, the measures against it will become more tough. For example, the "black lists" of Russian officials, banned from entering EU states can be significantly extended. Some have even expressed the view

that the Head of the Russian Government Vladimir Putin might occupy the first place on such a list, although few believe in the possibility of such a ban.

"We want to view Russia as a serious partner, but at the same time a democratic partner. We do not want to have anything to do with Russia that violates the principles of democracy. I would very much like that the European Union and Russia finally shake hands, basing their cooperation on the ideals of democracy, rather than on the use of force and ignoring the common standards and values", - said Ms. Ojuland.



PAYBACK TIME

Russia has once again lost a legal battle to its citizens: The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg has found the Russian authorities guilty of the disappearance of two citizens of Chechnya in 2002 and has ruled that Russia should pay 152,5 thousand Euros to their relatives.

"In August and December 2002 citizens of Grozny Lemma Khakiev and Mussa Temergiev were detained by armed men in camouflage, and, according to the data provided by the plaintiffs, were taken to different military units of the city. Right after their arrest their relatives submitted a com-

plaint about their disappearance to the authorities, criminal charges were filed. However, the fate of Khakiev and Temergiev remains unknown" - it is noted in the communiqué of the ECHR.

The ECHR points out that the Russian authorities did not present the files of the criminal cases to the Court upon its request, but only sent information about the fruitless searches for the missing. The Court studied the circumstances of the case and ruled, that the missing can be deemed dead "as a result of arrest by servicemen", - RIA Novosti reports.

According to the ruling of the Court, the Russian authorities violated a series

of Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights. In particular, Art.2 (right to life), Art.3 (prohibition of inhumane or degrading treatment), Art.5 (right to liberty and security) and Art.13 (right to an effective remedy). The Russian authorities are to pay the following to the plaintiffs: 25 thousand Euros for material damage, 120 thousand Euros for moral damage and 7,5 thousand Euros for legal costs, - it is reported by "Gazeta.ru".

DIDN'T FINISH SERVING HIS TIME



Left to right: Boris Ebzeev, former Head of Karachay-Cherkessia, Alexander Khloponin, Representative of Russian President in North Caucasus, and Rashid Temrezov, a new Head of Karachay-Cherkessia

On February 26 the President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev dismissed Boris Ebzeev, the Head of the Republic of Karachaevo-Cherkessia, whose presidential term was to expire in 2013. This is the first time that Medvedev has fired a Head of a subject of federation who he himself had appointed. According to the official statement, Ebzeev resigned on his own will, however heated debates about the reasons for his departure from this post are still going on in Karachaevo-Cherkessia.

It would be wrong to say that nothing had changed in the life of the Republic during Ebzeev's rule. It's true that the people live the same way that they had lived before, with other Presidents. However, in Ebzeev's times there were no violent disturbances such as the storming of the White House, as it happened during the rule of Mustafa Batdyev, who had been covering the crimes of his businessman - son-in-law. Ebzeev did not panic when he received letters claiming that the Government building was mined. The dog teams quickly searched the premises, did not find any explosives and the people

calmly continued working. Under Ebzeev's rule Karachaevo-Cherkessia positively differed from its neighbors in terms of the criminal situation.

According to several experts, the main reason for the dismissal of the Head of region, 60-year-old Boris Ebzeev - a professional lawyer, who had worked as a judge of the Constitutional Court of Russia for over fifteen years, was that he violated an unspoken rule which is to nominate to the post of the second person in the Republic a native Cherkess (the first usually is of Karachaevo origin). He was publicly criticized for this by the

Boris Ebzeev has left the Presidential post of Karachaevo-Cherkessia, after having served a little more than half of the set term.

Plenipotentiary envoy of the President to the Northern Caucasus Alexander Khloponin. After that the appointed Greek head of government was replaced by a Cherkess.

However, there are many people in the Republic who associate Ebzeev's departure with the expectation of fur-

ther escalation of clan clashes and cronyism.

Right after Ebzeev's resignation, a 34-year-old businessman Rashid Temrezov, who is considered to be a protégé of Mustafa Batdyev, was appointed as interim Head of the Republic. On the eve of the session of the Popular Assembly (Parliament) of Karachaevo-Cherkessia the Plenipotentiary envoy of the President to the Northern Caucasus Alexander Khloponin introduced Rashid Temrezov and asked that the Parliament not delay the consideration of his candidature. And the inauguration of the new President took place not in a month as is customary, but immediately. On the next day the new President accepted the resignation of the cabinet.

The first appointments made by Rashid Temrezov confirm the conviction of many, that the balance of power between the clans will once again play a decisive role in the socio-economic development of the Republic.

Now people are guessing whether the new leader will be able to help the region flourish, if he will act independently and for the benefit of the country and the republic, or will his own private fortune be his primary concern.

The events of the Manezh Square were overlooked. By the police and by the media. Perhaps, if everyone had been notified about December 11 the same way that they were later notified about the nationalist events that followed, this one wouldn't have taken place at all.

THE ECHO OF THE MANEZH SQUARE

When it happened, the first reaction was confusion. Of course, trouble and disturbances caused by football fans are not new to us, however, usually they revolve around the success or failure of our National football team. But what happened this time?

Nazi salutes next to the eternal flame, fascist symbols, racist inscriptions this is not football. In fact, according to the very few journalists who were present on the Manezh Square that day, they were under the impression, that the five-thousand-people mob had such power, that if it started marching towards the Kremlin, which was only a couple hundred meters away, the police probably wouldn't have been able to stop it. Unless they started shooting. It is terrifying to even imagine what would have happened then.

We all saw from the videos on Youtube, that on December 11 the Moscow police found itself on unfamiliar ground, completely different from the "Dissenter's Marches". When young men, who happened to be passing by the Manezh Square and were unfortunate enough to be of Caucasian origin (moreover, there were Russian nationalists in their group as well), were beaten up right in front of the OMON officers, it became more than just frightening.

Policemen hid them under an ambulance, taking on the blows, intended for the Caucasians.

The crowd fought with the police. And thank goodness, that they did so only with their bare hands and the ornaments taken off the Christmas tree in front of the Manezh building. It was a "close call."

However, the events developed further. Already in a week the slogan "In memory of Egor Sviridov" evolved into urges to "separate the Caucasus from Russia" during a rally at Ostankino.

Brief note:

On December 11, 2010 football fans gathered on the Manezh Square to honor the memory of "Spartak" fan Egor Sviridov, who was shot from a traumatic gun during a fight with several persons of Caucasian origin on the night of December 5 to 6, 2011 in Moscow. The event in his memory escalated into street fights and clashes with the OMON. 29 people were injured. Later on mass disturbances continued, spreading to St. Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don, Samara, Volgograd and other Russian cities.

Cut off the Caucasus - it's easy!

The rally by the Evropeisky Shopping Center in Moscow, exaggeratedly called "the rendezvous of the Caucasians and the Russians" does not deserve to be mentioned. There is nothing to mention. Somebody came, stood there, filmed something, yelled something, lit a few warning lights and left. Know-How of the police: young men, arrested by the shopping center on Sunday evening were sent to pass the medical commission at the military enlistment office.

It makes sense: if you came to yell "In the name of the Fatherland!" - go and defend it with actions, rather than words. The only drawback of such an approach was that the "police assistants of the enlistment offices" often came across people, who were unfit for military service.

When I was walking from the bus stop to Ostankino, a group of young people was running towards me:

"Don't go there! You're wearing military shoes - you will be recruited at once!" - they yelled, passing me by.

I didn't understand. When I approached a colonel of the police, standing by the monorail station near Ostankino, I asked: I am a journalist, may I enter in these shoes?

He didn't understand either. And thus we parted.

Around two dozen video cameras were carefully filming some "representative of the National-Democratic Alliance", who was reading the so-called resolution on the revision of the Russian borders, containing the demand to separate the Republics of the Northern Caucasus from the Russian Federation.

The young crowd, which came to the rally, was not allowed near this "reading". Strong detachments of various structures of the Ministry of Interior, encircling Ostankino, brought to mind the events of 1993.

It seems that the way they think is also similar. It could be heard in the loud conversations in the yelling radiosets: "Squeeze them out into the park, cut them off, bring in the OMON, leave one hole and pack them up!" - somebody was yelling on the police radio-wave.

God knows what was going on in the Ostankino Park. Crowds of young people with lights and some sort of posters were wandering the alleys. The police surrounded a wedding party, which was unfortunate enough to be in the park at the time. The crowd of young, "happy", that is slightly less than sober,

wedding guests was mistaken for nationalists, their documents were checked. The angry bride in a veil came to the park and took all of them away to a restaurant nearby.

Some kids took me for their own, started sharing details of the rally, as well as their impressions of the police and the national policy of Russia. A lot of swear words.

I was amazed to find out that some of them are not from Moscow (two of them were from Ryazan). They asked me where the nearest subway station was, in case "they are chased away again".

Inside the park a group of journalists, those who dared (around five people, some of them wearing bullet-proof jackets with the word "Press" on them), together with the OMON, were looking for nationalists. Suddenly, out of the darkness came a column of youth, around two hundred people, and started walking in our direction.

The OMON began screaming into walky-talkies, demanding back-up, and formed a chain, a live barrier on the path of the nationalists. However, there were only around two dozen people in uniform in this area. As it turned out later, the main police forces had been located at the other park entrance. The crowd decided to trick them and go the other way. It was warned about the ambush by phone.

The OMON got ready to act. I didn't see them holding weapons, however, maybe they did have guns under their coats. My train of thought was as follows: if they start putting pressure on the police, which is quite easy for such a crowd, they wouldn't shoot in response! By law, they can, but watching this from such short distance isn't safe.

Suddenly, I heard a voice behind me:

- It's about to start, let's get out of here!

I turned around and only saw the backs of journalists running away from the park. I hid behind a tree, knelt

down on one knee into the snow, and got my camera out - come what may.

The battle didn't happen. As far as I heard, the crowd gave in, against guarantees "that everyone left the park and went home". Instead of that, at the park entrance each participant, one by one, was led through a long corridor of policemen, searched and stuffed into a bus. In the bus they were once again searched, their personal data was taken, and then, upon exiting the bus they were stuffed into patrol cars in small groups and taken to district police stations. Somebody tried to protest, by saying that "in the park your people promised to let everybody go!". Ridiculous.

An hour after the "stuffing" took place the police walky-talkies were yelling: "Izmailovo isn't accepting them!", "Taganskaya isn't accepting them!", "Arbat isn't accepting them, they are already freezing in the car and have started knocking, what do we do with them?"

The district police stations were not able to manage such a large number of detained persons (the total turned out to be over 1200 people). Plus, it was unclear what was to be written in the official police protocol? That one thousand people were standing in the same place and "loudly using swear words and behaving provocatively" (common wording of police protocol in cases of arrest under the article "disorderly conduct" of the Code of Administrative Offenses)?

It all looked very strange and it was absolutely clear, that the problem could not be solved by such "stuffing" methods. In fact, they could have the opposite effect.

When I was leaving Ostankino, I was searched twice by the police, The second time the OMON officer pointed to my video camera (I was filming the arrest of the young crowd):

- No filming!

I tried asking why - and was told, that if I was interested, I would be taken

away with the rest of the crowd. I decided that I would probably rather go home and put the camera away. What goes on in the district police stations I know very well - I have worked there.

Other "Manezhkass"

I attended all of the nationalist rallies that followed. An incredible amount of police, helicopters, armored cars, soldiers, cordons, preventive arrests and Nothing.

When watching the rally commemorating "40 days since the death of Egor Sviridov" on January 15 on the Kronshtad boulevard, I noted that that police treated these demonstrators with extreme tolerance. When a drunk fan fiercely and fearlessly started a moronic tirade and swore away at an OMON colonel, and all he had to say in return was "Don't use such foul words!", and did nothing else, it says a lot. "They" have sensed their own power and will not give it up without a fight.

All of the subsequent rallies or "Manezhkass" turned out to be so inconsiderable in number and "blank" exclusively due to the fact that the main "warriors" - the football fans - were not involved. For now they do not identify themselves with the Nazis. But they are learning very fast to do so.

On January 15 on Kronshtad boulevard they already sang along with the nationalists, who were bawling distorted Soviet songs, the lyrics of which were "encrusted" with new words and new "obvious" meaning.

The Story of a Video

The video-address of Ramazan Utarbiev: an unexpected detonator

"On February 8 a video-address of Ramazan Utarbiev appeared on the Internet", - these were the first words of the news reports of almost all information agencies of Russia and beyond.

The video was posted on the website of "the Caucasian Knot". That can be seen by its logo. However, to be frank,

the video wasn't exactly made by the journalists of this center. It just turned out that way.

Nevertheless, on February 8 throughout the entire day there were only 300 views of the video on the page of the "Caucasian Knot" on Youtube. His "fame" started with the reposting of the video all over the Internet, on other websites. At the moment that this is being written there have already been around 500 thousand views. That is a serious number.

Ramazan Utarbiev is a witness of the fight, in which Egor Sviridov was killed. He was arrested by the police, but released sometime later. According to some - because there were no grounds for his arrest. According to others - "the diasporas pressured the policemen."

The events of Manezh Square occurred after that, on December 11. Putin met with the fans. The police inspector who released Ramazan is now himself a suspect. Ramazan is on the run.

Reminder: Cherkosov, along with the other six participants of the fight were detained, however five of them were released that same night. In response to that groups of infuriated fans blocked the Leningradsky prospect. After the events of December 11, 2010 on the Manezh Square the suspected instigators of the fight, as well as the murderer, Aslan Cherkosov, were arrested once again. Utarbiev managed to escape (it is still unknown where he is at the moment).

In his video-address Ramazan Utarbiev says that he is ready to be held responsible before the law. But only provided that the law-enforcement agencies guarantee his safety, "fairness, justice and an impartial investigation."

According to my friend from the Dagestani "Chernovik" newspaper, the CD with the video-address of Utarbiev was indeed brought to them by a young man.

"He was nervous. He said, that he was supposed to have done this already a

Brief note:

The video-address of Ramazan Utarbiev appeared on the portal of the "Caucasian Knot", which received it from journalists of a local Dagestani newspaper "Chernovik" (to them this video was brought by an unidentified person). In the video the Dagestani young man tells his version of the fight that took place on the night of December 5-6, 2010, which resulted in the death of the "Spartak" fan Egor Sviridov. According to Utarbiev, the group of Caucasian young men was attacked by a group of "drunk football fans". The fight ended with the murder of Egor Sviridov - he was shot from a traumatic gun by Aslan Cherkosov, a native of Kabardino-Balkaria.

week ago, that he had no idea where this CD was from, that he got it through a middleman, and everything was arranged in such a manner that there was no way for him to find out where Utarbiev was hiding. Up until now we still have not been approached by any law enforcement agencies", - I was told by my colleague, whose name, if you allow me, I will not indicate.

Everything else is in the video. Of course Ramazan's words were like an explosion. How can it be, when everything has already been decided: the culprits are the Caucasians and the policemen who let them go. Even Putin had been spoken to on this matter!

Every person saw, what he wanted to see. The internal investigation over the fact that the participants of the fight were set free, has already been called the execution of the investigation. The meeting with Putin was interpreted as a demonstration of his full support for what had happened on the Manezh Square.

And now this video.... Of course the nationalists already "know how this video was made" etc. Naturally, they insist that every single word in that video is a lie, that it is a well-played act, and analyze every single word and movement of Utarbiev in order to prove their point.

"The Judgement" had already been made on the Internet, in particular, with the help of the media, that provide



"expert opinions" based on the testimonies "of the acquaintances of Egor Sviridov", "competent sources" etc. The verdict is "guilty".

The question remains - who?

The thought that Sviridov's murder, which practically led to a revolution in Moscow, could have happened differently than it is described on nationalistic websites - is something like a piece of sugar in the gas tank. The car might start, but the engine will get stuck.

An "agreement" had been reached: the Caucasians are to be blamed. Horrible Caucasians attacked a crowd of hippie football fans in the center of Moscow.

I believe that the final word could have been said by the video from the security cameras, which is mentioned by Utarbiev in his address. This video had also been mentioned by policemen during his arrest. Where is this video now?

It is unlikely that it will ever be shown. If everything turns out to be "not exactly the way that it has already been decided" there will be a new explosion.

There will be, because it is very much wanted. The video will be called a fake, and once again all blame will fall upon "the corrupted police and the media", and then the authorities.

They do not need a new upheaval. That is why we will never see that video. The favourite tactic of the authorities is switched on - the tactic of "suppression". What if it works....

The Manezh Generation

Everybody noted, that the participants of the Manezh rally, as well as

those that followed, were mostly kids 15 to 17 years of age.

Why? They are that very generation, whose parents were placed in a survival situation in the 1990s. Nobody thought about their kids: they had to fight for their lives and not die of hunger in between the coups, inflations, financial pyramids, currency change, defaults etc.

In the first decade of the new millennium Russia was pumped with unheard of dosages of "patriotism or death".

Do you think that the "lessons of Seliger" have already been forgotten? The media spent years yelling about patriotism, in fact, in a very aggressive manner (who is not a patriot, is not with us). Each sports match was accompanied by commercial slogans: "Root for our team!". By the way, that is what started the "pogroms" on Manezh Square in 2004 - the defeat of the Russian national football team.

Now these "sport-patriotic games" have been guided in the right direction.

Right for whom? There are many options here, including this one: "In order to triumphantly solve a problem, you first need to triumphantly create it."

Therefore, the events of Manezh Square will again repeat themselves. And as for Ramazan Utarbiev - I do not envy him. He has fallen into a trap. If he had kept silent and accepted the rules of the authorities - perhaps it would have been better. But he decided to take a direct road, to try and prove something, and came up with the video-address....

We can only hope that one day the true circumstances of the murder of Egor Sviridov will become known.

Time will put everything in its place. Meanwhile, we were all unprepared for this video-address. And, damn it, the nationalists were right, when they said that Ramazan's video posted on the "Caucasian Knot" did him more damage than good. As sad as that might be.

I pity those, who yell that he prepared this address in order to protect himself in the face of the investigation. God is obviously ungracious with such people: they have been cheated

Meanwhile, "Manezhka" remains to be a brand. And as it seems, for long. Because in order for something to change you have to change it. And we suppress, by old habit. Instinctively.

Many - out of purely patriotic reasons.

Dmitry FLORIN

PS. On the night of March 6 to 7 Ramazan Utarbiev was detained in Dagestan. This time, I'm afraid, for long. March 11 is coming up. Nationalists will be gathering on the Manezh Square. The authorities have already told them that the verdict in the Utarbiev case will be different - this was guaranteed by Putin's visit to the cemetery where Sviridov is buried and his meeting with the football fans. Quite an impressive gesture....

Concerning the fate awaiting Utarbiev, I believe that there is little hope for a fair trial and sentence in his case. Because, if it is proven that everything in that fight happened differently than it was portrayed by the fans and nationalists, the Court as well as the law-enforcement officers will once again be declared "enemies of the Russian people". On the other hand, if Utarbiev is thrown behind bars for a long time, they will not be given unworthy labels. Therefore, although I would love to be wrong, the outcomes of the investigation and trial seem to be too predictable....

IDENTITIES NOT VERIFIED

At the end of last autumn the Ministry of the Interior of Ingushetia reported the liquidation of two insurgents on the North-Western suburb of the Plievo settlement.

Policemen insisted that "two unidentified persons showed armed resistance to the officers of the Federal Security Service Directorate in the Republic of Ingushetia. In the dug out shelter they found fragments of human remains, a hand-held AT grenade-launcher, machine-gun shells, metal dishes and food wrappers. The Nazran interdistrict investigative department is conducting an inspection of the matter. Measures are being taken to identify the deceased."

Their identities still have not been verified. However, it is known that on November 23 two young men went missing, one of whom, Magomed Gorchkhanov, was only 17 years old. Later on his relatives identified him by the clothes on one of the exploded bodies, mentioned in the police report.

The life of Magomed started during the bombings of Grozny, where his parents used to live. The first Chechen war, which caught the family off guard, drove them into the basement, where the boy's father Boris Gorchkanov got sick and lost an eye, due to the hunger and severe living conditions. Now he is an invalid of the first group and hardly ever leaves the house. After fleeing Chechnya the family, with already three children, wandered from refugee camp to refugee camp. They finally got half a cottage on the outskirts of the Plievo village only a few years ago.

Boris Gorchkhanov remembers:

- On that day, November 22, armored cars came and surrounded our block. Our door was open. The doors that were closed were broken down, the houses were searched and everything

in them turned upside down. Our neighbors lost all of their valuables. My wife wanted to see what was going on, but she was told not to look outside.

She thought that such were the times, that people could be taken away for nothing and told her son to leave and spend the night at a friend's house, until the searches here ended. He was into computers, and his friend had one. And so he left. We has always been under our control and never left the house for long. The next day a young guy, who was on the wanted list came over to the friend's house. He offered to give my son and his friend a ride home, and they accepted.

On the way they decided to visit some friends in Nasyr-Kort. That is where their car was stopped in order to check their documents. The wanted young man started shooting and was killed. Our son, along with his friend, were tied up, stuffed into a trunk and taken away.

His friend's last name is Korigov. After a few days of searching his mother said that there were news: two corpses were found on the outskirts of Plievo, they are now in the morgue. We have too see, whether they are our boys or not. My wife went but couldn't enter: her heart couldn't take it. Later on my nephews went to the morgue and identified Magomed by his finger. His body was blast-scarred beyond recognition by the explosion.

The father of the deceased believes that after abducting the young men, the special forces officers took them across the canal to the forest line, dug a hole, placed a grenade launcher, in order to imitate armed resistance and then blew



them both up.

- We took our son's remains and buried him in accordance with the Muslim traditions. Although, up until the end we were not sure whether it was him. The clothes are said to be his, although they could have been planted there. The investigation says, that the identities are now being verified, however still nothing has been done to clarify the situation. They say that they are expecting DNA samples from Rostov. Nobody ever gives us any answers.

In reality, Boris is convinced that there is no investigation at all. Now he is worried for his second son. He is 15 years old and lives with his relatives, who do not let him leave the house. They fear the repetition of known cases, when, after killing the older brother, the federal forces come for the younger one and take him away under the pretext that "he will want to avenge his brother."

- I spent 35 years in Grozny- says the old man sadly shaking his head - up until the war, until 1995. We could not have even imagined that something like this was possible. We walked around the city at 3 A.M. and did not fear anything. By contrast, in the past two years 56 people have disappeared without a trace from our village alone. I want to send my younger son somewhere, but at the same time it is scary to be left without him. Plus, we have financial difficulties. The whole family lives on my pension, my wife is not working right now. After my son's death my health has deteriorated considerably. Before that I was doing quite well..

Lidia MIKHALCHENKO

A SCARF WAR or absurdly confidential

On February 22 journalists as well as relatives of the defendant, who came to the trial, were expelled from the court room of the Lefortovo district Court (judge presiding - Alexander Rybak). The defendant was a citizen of Ingushetia Issa Khashagulgov. The reason for expelling his relatives and journalists was supposedly the confidential code assigned to the materials of his case. The most concerned about the confidentiality were the inspector and the prosecutor. They concealed even their own names. The conspiracy began only when the secret service officers noticed the presence of journalists at one of the hearings when Issa's period under guard was extended once again.

Issa Khashalgov - is not an unfamiliar name in the Republic. His brother, Sultan - Girei, used to work at the Ministry of construction of the Republic, which is said to have taken considerable loans from local businessmen for President Evkurov, promising the lenders, on his behalf, construction contracts. Rumor has it that around 500 million rubles had been collected for the Administration. Shortly after that the Minister of Construction Amirkhanov was killed. Sultan-Girei became an inconvenient figure do the authorities. And, as it often happens in Russia in such cases, his business was destroyed.

Some time later, a high-profile "scarf" scandal broke out. The daughter of Issa, eleven-year-old Khava, was not allowed to enter School № 3 in Karabulak, because of a scarf, which she refused to take off her head. The incident received a lot of coverage in the media, and civil servants from the Ministry of Education came to the Republic to try and resolve it. It all ended in a peaceful way: the Principal of the school recognized the girl's right to the wardrobe of her choice.

However, only a bit more than a month passed, and Issa was abducted. He was declared to be a major actor of the bandit underground, dangerous terrorist and organizer of the terrorist attack on the Vladikavkaz market on September 9. The fact that several dozen of such "orga-

nizers" had already been caught did not bother them at all. Later on, however, the terrorist attack accusation rendered itself irrelevant. The allegations left were - illegal weapons-bearing and participation in an illegal armed group. It is really worth reading the accusation papers, which are a masterpiece of FSB investigator Smolyakov and are a truly impressive example of this genre:

"Khashagulgov is accused of leading an illegal armed group, as well as of illegally obtaining, storing and bearing weapons and ammunition while forming part of an organized group. In particular he is accused of the fact that in 2004 (more specific time has not been determined), when permanently residing on the territory of the Republic of Ingushetia and intending to take part in hostilities against units of the federal armed forces on the territory of the Chechen Republic, he joined an illegal armed group."

That is incredible! Very often a person might forget (it happens to everyone) what he did the day before. But Smolyakov knows everything in detail about the thoughts and intentions of Khashagulgov back in 2004. Pure Messing! The period under guard of the accused has been extended all the way up until the end of May. Perhaps, the ramrods were themselves not happy about their tactical success. The "client" refuses to accept any of the charges, he says that the alleged illegal weapon was planted on purpose, talks about his six small children, and does not plead guilty on any account.

And here's what's curious: the investigation is in full swing, however the detained hasn't been properly interrogated. Perhaps that is the truly confidential matter, which is being carefully hidden from the journalists: the failure of the investigation, the emptiness and groundlessness of a high-profile case?

Petimat Khashagulgova, Issa's wife, has been through a lot since the arrest of her husband. In the best traditions of Russian reality, especially since we are talking about the Caucasus, people



On the photograph Petimat Khashagulgova with her children, the eldest of which is 12 years old.

came to take away her children. Reason: the kids did not go to school. After her husband's arrest, Petimat received so many threats to her and her family, that she did not dare send them even to school. The Social services came and said that she was depriving her children of the right to an education. She managed to fight off the first attack of the officials, suddenly preoccupied with the fate of her children. After that, with great effort, by taking them to and from school, the woman managed to bring them back to class.

She says that the kids often get up in the middle of the night, they are afraid of cars with no license plates, openly "holding guard" under their window, shudder from every sound and keep asking: "Where is daddy?". Petimat believes, that if they give into the pressure and leave the Republic, it will seem like they are running away and will definitely convince everyone that Issa is guilty.

- We've grown used to being followed, - Petimat says and even laughs. - Sometimes I want to approach these cars that keep following us and say: "Today I'm going to Nazram to the market. Could you be so kind as to give me a ride, since you'll be following me there anyway. This way I can save money on fuel, and you'll have everything you need for your report."

She hasn't yet been able to implement this plan of hers. When the drivers notice that Petimat is coming their way they turn around abruptly and go in the opposite direction. However, not for long.

For now, Issa's term in the isolation ward has been extended until May 25.

Lea GUREVICH

MARET ELDIEVA FORGIVEN BLOOD

The creation of a Commission for the reconciliation of blood (sworn) enemies in the Chechen Republic was announced in August of last year. It was reported that the idea belonged to the leader of the Republic Ramzan Kadyrov, who became the head of the Commission.

Blood vengeance in the Caucasus is an ancient phenomenon, just about as ancient as the Caucasus themselves. This custom has very deep roots that go way back in centuries and form part of the Adat - a code of unwritten rules, an absolute requirement, which everyone had to fulfill. It must be noted that for the Chechens, a people who have been involved in various wars throughout its history, vengeance has become both a restraining and a destructive factor, affecting the society from within: inappropriate behavior in public, a reckless action towards a woman, and much more could have led to a fatal result. Therefore, in order to avoid trouble, it was necessary to abide by the rules of the Adat and comply with a certain moral code.

However, murders that resulted from blood vengeance led to a decrease in the population, which was already decreasing due to armed conflicts. There were also aspects, typical for the Chechen society. For example, if a war broke out or a natural disaster occurred, blood enemies suspended their vengeance plans and fought side by side against a common enemy. It was also not allowed to kill your blood enemy when he was in a vulnerable state - that is, if he was wounded, sick or sleeping. Society judged the murder of a blood enemy from behind, therefore, if the pursuers caught up with him, but he did not turn to face them, the vengeance was not to be carried out, but postponed until later.

The behavior of the person to be blamed for someone's death meant a

lot: it was supposed to meet the requirements of the Adat. Custom demanded that he feel remorse for what had happened, as well as respect for the relatives of the deceased, and if anyone ever disregarded with any of these rules they very soon deeply regretted such irresponsible behavior. Many times the price to be paid was death. An interesting detail: two men could be killed in vengeance for one killed woman. It was the woman, the keeper of the hearth

and home, the mentor in the family, the mother, that was given a very special place within the Chechen culture. The fact that a woman at the time of her death might have been pregnant was also taken into consideration. To lose one's life because of a woman was possible without killing her, but as a result of misbehavior. Sometimes an innocent joke was interpreted as misbehavior, if the woman herself or her relatives saw it as a violation of the boundaries of what

was acceptable. Chechens of a respectable age remember situations, when a murder took place because a young man accidentally touched a girl while dancing at a wedding. There were also cases, when the blood enemy did not only stay alive, but was forgiven because the mother of the deceased spoke in his defense. A long time ago a murder took place in a village. A guest was present at a party (sinkeram). When the party was in full swing one of the young men present asked the host to give him the floor and reproached the girl of his choice for being unable to behave properly in public. He did it in a very harsh way, thus insulting all of the men present. The host asked the impolite orator to leave the party. The guest intervened. He said that he is determined to defend the girl and demands that the orator explain himself and apologize. When the orator did not do so, first the guest, and then the rest of

the men took out their knives. The offender was stabbed with a dagger at once.

Escaping from his pursuers the guest ran into the first house that he encountered. He was met by an old woman. When she found out that he had committed murder she hid him. Her son and husband came home. A while later the elders of the town entered their yard and told her that her second son has been killed and told her the whole story. The woman realized who she was hiding in the den and told them at once. The father and son rushed towards their blood enemy, but the woman stood in their way: "Over my dead body!" she said, and then she tore the scarf off her head and announced that she forgives the murderer of her son. A torn-off scarf meant that in addition to this being her decision, it was also a request directed at all those present. And if a woman bore her head, her



request was satisfied unconditionally.

However, if you look at blood vengeance from the religious point of view, there is a great difference: Many things that are allowed under the Adat, are not allowed under religious canons, in this particular case, those of Islam. Forgiving blood is an act, which very positively characterizes a Muslim. Religion also does not permit to kill the innocent (those who did not commit murder). Religion in general has very high regard for forgiveness: it is desired by Allah and worthy of a true Muslim. In real life it often so happened that the murderer (during the Soviet times and afterwards) was imprisoned, and the vengeance was carried out by killing his closest relative or by finding a way to get to him. Thus, it turned out that the guilty was punished both in accordance with the law, and the Adat.



Brief note:

According to the data of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Chechnya and according to the results of the work of the Commission on the reconciliation of blood enemies, from August 28, 2010 to March 9, 2011, 277 conflicts have been detected, 255 of them have been resolved, in 46 of them, negotiations are still on-going.

Among the resolved, there were conflicts which had been started over a century ago (in 1905) or a bit less than a century (in 1926 and 1933).

Remark: Since 2005, 646 conflicts based on blood vengeance have been resolved in the Chechen Republic with the help and support of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Chechen Republic.



What are the main complaints of the citizens of Chechnya, what are the working conditions for human rights defenders and the situation with Human Rights in the Republic - Human Rights Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic **Nurdi Nukhazhiev** spoke about this and much more to **Abdulla Duduev** and **Maret Eldieva**.

NURDI NUKHAZHIEV: "KADYROV IS THE DEFENDER OF THE RIGHTS OF CHECHENS"

What is the average number of applications that you receive each month? What do people mainly complain about?

We are now in the process of preparing the Annual Report of the Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic for 2010. It will reflect over five thousand registered appeals that we have received from our citizens, which have come from over 47 subjects of the Russian Federation. We have also received appeals from convicts - citizens of our Republic, who are now serving their sentence in various parts of Russia.

The subjects of the appeals to the Ombudsman's office are very different, starting from the violation of the right to free movement, ending with problems related to housing, as well as other unresolved issues of the past, such as the location of the abducted and missing persons, exhumation of unidentified human remains, revision of criminal cases of convicts who did not have

proper defense, as well as the family reunification of people who were forced by certain circumstances to leave to Europe. By the way, there are even examples of reunification of family ties with the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, as well as consulates and embassies in other countries. There have been appeals requesting help in returning kids. For example, the parents took them away and the grandparents want to know where their grandchildren are. There have been divorce-related appeals, when the father or mother leave with the child. Very complicated issues, by the way. These cases are usually accompanied by a long and tedious correspondence.

It appears that social issues prevail?

Mainly yes, they do. On post-conflict territory, before the legislation is restored and operational and normal daily life revived, such questions always

prevail. Let's take for example the payment of housing costs. Many citizens still don't have jobs, certain categories of citizens have benefits. For example teachers, doctors, nurses, war veterans.

Do you get any complaints about the work of the law enforcement agencies?

Despite what many people might say and write, there has been a breaking-point in the sphere of human rights protection in Chechnya. There are cases of illegal detention of citizens by the law enforcement structures. But step by step we are getting rid of such problems, since the transparency, openness and accessibility of the Ministry of the Interior of Chechnya allow us to discuss this topic. The heads of several NGOs, as well as a staff member of my apparatus form part of the Public Council of the Ministry of Interior. Apart from that, a public supervisory committee, which contains 12 people from local NGOs, has been

created and is now functioning in the Chechen Republic. The Committee has the right, without giving prior notice, to visit the pre-trial detention centers (SIZO) and colonies. Cooperation agreements have been signed between the Human Rights Ombudsman and the law enforcement agencies. In the framework of these agreements we create working groups, which check every alarming signal on the spot. There are situations when a person has been detained and his family hasn't been notified who detained him, what for and where was he taken. This is a serious violation of the law. In such cases the family of the detained, out of habit acquired in the past, hurry to our office for help. Of course people still fear that the detained person can disappear for good. Then we accept their appeal as a case of abduction. In reality, it is an abduction by unidentified law enforcement officers, if they had failed to introduce themselves.

Were you able to find people in such cases?

Almost always. Over the past year, except for five cases, we were able to find the detained on the second or third day after their disappearance. It turned out that the law enforcement agencies received information on the detained, which was of course convincing, and we cannot interfere with the work of the agencies until they analyze and process this information. Taking into consideration that the human rights situation in the Republic was not quite adequate in the past, the head of the Republic and the Minister of the Interior, demand, in spite of everything, that all law enforcement officers respect the law, and that they notify the relatives if their family member has been detained. Nevertheless, they do have the right to detain a person and out of security reasons, refrain from notifying his family until the relative information is thoroughly examined and processed.

According to your data, how many people have been abducted in 2010?

According to the information that I possess, the five cases that I have already mentioned are the main con-

cern. We still do not know what happened to them. In all other cases we were able to contact the law enforcement officials, and after all relevant information was analyzed and processed the detained were released.

Who might be responsible for this: the local law enforcement agencies or the federals?

It is hard to tell.

Are the representatives of federal agencies even allowed to conduct operations independently on the territory of the Chechen Republic without the support of local structures?

The declared laws are one thing, the way things are done in reality - is another. All of the problems of the law enforcement agencies arise from the lack of cooperation and unity of command. Each institution is fighting for its own interests. This has led to great suffering of thousands of people in the past. For example, one checkpoint did not communicate with another, which was only 100 meters away. We encountered so many difficulties, so many complications when we tried looking for missing persons back then! The Command of one military unit had no idea whatsoever about what the neighboring unit was doing. There was no tuned cooperation on the necessary levels, the right hand did not know what the left was up to.

But now there are no checkpoints, are there?

No, but the institutions remain. For example, various agencies can serve as the initiator of tracing activities - the FSB, the criminal investigation office and others. When there is cooperation among them, activities are carried out consistently. Otherwise, it is very difficult to determine who undertook what and who was the initiator. If the operational-investigative assignment was received from another subject of federation, then you might never be told where the person has gone. There are temporary networks and permanent ones, for example within the Ministry of Interior of the Chechen Republic. However, there are services, which do not always work in a clear and coher-

ent manner. Therefore, a lot depends on the initiator of the tracing, on the entity ultimately responsible.

We cannot avoid the topic of the activities of "Memorial" in Chechnya. You often, almost regularly, criticize the "Memorial" activists, as well as other Russian and international Human Rights organizations. Why?

I've said this before, and I'll say it again, that I was the person working in the government human rights system in 2002, who lent them a helping hand. I introduced their representatives into all of the coordination councils and committees that were being created in the Republic, including the deceased Natasha Estemirova. I always responded to their wishes and met them half way up until the moment when "Memorial" received very rigid instructions from its head Orlov.

You're talking about the Grozny branch of "Memorial"?

Of course. I must also add that it was the situation in Chechnya that turned "Memorial" into a "famous" organization.

So you believe that their main goal is PR?

Taking into consideration, who finances their activities, it is clear, what kind of tunes are played, so to speak. They need to assert themselves from time to time: that "Memorial" is investigating something here, it has identified human rights violations, is actively engaged in the search for abducted persons etc. All of this is nothing but eye service, pure showing off. The information that they provide is usually not verified. They'll spend five minutes talking to someone at the market, and then start spreading rumors. They thrive off of the problems and difficulties that exist in the Republic. They're only concerned about completing an order.

So you believe that those who provide funding for Human Rights organizations are usually pursuing political aims?

Yes, I do. Through these organizations they receive negative information

from the Republic. Besides, Orlov has created a strict hierarchy within the organization, which is completely incompatible with human rights activities. Around two dozen people are working in the Grozny branch of the organization. They are like civil servants, they have a fixed salary, and even if they want to take part in the rallies and demonstrations of local NGOs, in order to support the legitimate demands of the people, they have to call Orlov first and coordinate with him. If he gives his consent, they can join their colleagues, if not, the organization stays closed. The main objective of "Memorial" is prompt output of information, preferably negative. They do not interact with the authorities that are responsible for resolving the problems of citizens. In order to resolve the concrete problems of a particular person we camp on the door steps of those in authority, we sit in their waiting rooms expecting our turn. "Memorial" on the other hand, has completely different methods, which border on provocations. All they need is to use a painful problem, which has no immediate solution, to their advantage, that's it. They couldn't care less about what will happen later. They have nothing to do with actual human rights protection, let alone with the investigation of crimes.

However, the Joint mobile task group of lawyers and human rights activists from different regions of Russia, created at the end of 2009, detect violations of the rights of citizens, people have appealed to them for help, haven't they?

This is all a soap bubble. I've spoken to Kalyapin - the Head of the Nizhegorodsky Committee against torture, member of the joint mobile task group, and his friend whom he sent to Chechnya. We got acquainted. The young man comes from the Republic of Komi, where I have spent 24 years of my life by the way. A great percentage of the population of the Republic has a criminal record. One penal colony practically sits on top of the other. I asked him: "Don't you have human rights problems in your Republic?". The young man blushed, he had nothing to say. But Kalyapin received significant

funds for this project! So he recruited a lot of people, introduced "innovations" into the sphere of human rights practice: fitting vehicles with specialized equipment; came to the Chechen Republic incognito, like a spy, and started defending human rights. How is it possible to do so without even interacting with my office, with his colleagues in the Republic, who could provide him with serious assistance?

But they don't need that. Another member of the same group is from Tatarstan. Judging by his behavior, I understood at once that he used to serve in a law enforcement agency. I turned out to be right: he worked in a Regional Directorate for Combating Organized Crime for six years and now decided to become a Human Rights activist.

And how did they so easily come to the Republic, where, according to them the "situation is extremely tense"? After our conversation I told them that they are absolutely not needed here. Perhaps they should go and defend human rights in their own regions. The Republic of Komi has a whole host of human rights problems. But all they need is to make money.

I prepared a special report on torture. We achieved the initiation of four criminal cases. Even one case is a lot when it comes to torture. No such thing should ever occur in our society!

The "Declaration of NGOs of the Chechen Republic on the re-initiation of the work of the "Memorial" Human Rights Center in Chechnya", which was suspended after the murder of Natalia Estimirova in July of 2009, was published in December of the same year. The document, signed by the heads of 32 Chechen NGOs, contained a pretty unflattering assessment of the activities and plans for the future of "Memorial" in Chechnya. However, several of the people, listed among the signatories, said that they had not even seen this document, were unaware of its existence and that their signatures were added by you. How is that possible?

Of course, this is not true, but I understand them.

Furthermore, they claimed, that after they made a rebuttal you threatened them, saying that they will have problems if they withdraw their signatures.

I forgive them for this as well. These people have done a lot during the rough war years. I myself was also a head of an NGO back then. At the time, cruel punitive operations were carried out in the Republic. For example, among the contract soldiers of one regiment they selected 78 people who had four and more criminal records. This horde of criminals came here to rob and kill. There was a case of open robbery and violence in one of the villages of Chechnya, which I wrote about. Even unit commanders of the above-mentioned regiment were detained. This was the first of such cases. The stolen property was partially returned to its owners. In those times human rights defenders protected people any way they could.

But was that Declaration really signed by all of the people whose names are listed in the document?

Yes, of course they signed it. We contacted everyone, they all agreed with the document, we all work together. It was "Memorial" that tried to bring discord among the human rights activists of the Republic.

Did they succeed?

No! For example, they tried to get Hedi Saratova (Head of the RPO "Objective") on their side, but did not succeed. "Memorial" is always very disrespectful towards its colleagues. They claim, that there are no other human rights activists in Chechnya. They do not want to admit that now there are Human Rights organizations in the Chechen Republic, capable of defending people's rights. "Memorial" doesn't like that.

How can you explain then that some of the signatories denied having signed the document? Do they have a strong connection with "Memorial"? Or are they just so afraid of you?

I have already answered this question. As for "Memorial", there hasn't been a moment in history when the



organization had actively and conceptually supported the legitimate demands of the Chechen human rights activists, such as the demands for the creation of a Commission responsible for locating the abducted and missing persons, the right of free movement, the liquidation of checkpoints, securing the rights of convicts, ending the falsification of Chechen history.

You refer to the sources of funding of certain organizations, and your negative attitude towards them can be sensed at once. However, in Chechnya there are many NGOs which deem themselves Human Rights organizations, and receive grants from the very same sources. Do you believe that in this case such funding helps protect the rights of the people?

The involvement of NGOs in the Republic took place in completely different circumstances. They do not engage in PR activities, but rather do all that is in their power to help people, to improve the quality of their work and knowledge. At that, unlike "Memorial", the human rights organization of the Chechen Republic do not complete somebody's orders, but interact with equal partners. Furthermore, "Memorial" and other similar organizations are the fifth column in the ideology, that is inferior to Russia, and to Chechnya in particular.

How would you describe your relationship with the local human

rights organizations? What are their working conditions like?

We have succeeded in achieving very productive cooperation and interaction with the human rights organizations of the Republic. In autumn of 2002, the Head of the Chechen Republic, Akhmad-Khadzhi Kadyrov, signed a decree, which passed the legal expertise of the Council of Europe, and the military was forced to issue several orders, directed at the minimization of human rights violations.

The current President of the Republic Ramzan Kadyrov, signed a decree, directed at improving the interaction of the authorities with the society, the development of NGOs and defining the personal responsibility of leaders for the violation of human rights of citizens and the impediment of the work of human rights organizations.

However, much depends on the human rights activists themselves, on their ability to grasp the objectives before them. It is not at all difficult to register an organization, it is important to learn to work constructively with your colleagues and with the authorities in the name of common aims. A few years ago there were a lot of human rights organizations. At present their number has decreased, however the quality of work of those that remain has improved considerably. Today there are around fifteen human rights organizations in the Republic, whose work is effective. For example, the "Human Rights Center of Chechnya" (Minkail Ezhev), "Niiso" (Zargan Makhadzhiev),

the youth organizations "Dialogue" (Leila Ayubova), "Stimul" (Ruslan Yarkiev) and others.

The population of the Republic knows about the office of the Ombudsman, where they will always receive prompt and qualified assistance.

We often administer complaints of the people together with our NGO colleagues. We also often appeal to the authorities together.

In the interaction with authorities the professionalism of the human rights activists is key. It is necessary to use only indisputable facts. Information must be checked and rechecked 20 times.

Do the authorities of the Republic provide funding for the activities of Human Rights organizations?

For the first time in the Decree of the President of the Chechen Republic № 451 from 06.12.2007 "On the additional measures of ensuring the rights and freedoms of the person and citizen in the Chechen Republic" it is recommended that the Ombudsman foresee in his budget expenses related to joint events with NGOs. A series of joint projects have been planned. Recently a Commission has been created under the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation on awarding of government grants. The republican NGOs have the opportunity to submit an application there as well.

You cannot fake democracy or liberalization. If you are a competent professional, principled human rights

activist, who has influence in society, you will be reckoned with.

But there cannot be too much or just the right amount of democracy - it's either there, or it isn't, isn't that right?

You cannot pose the question that way. For example some people believe that democracy is a total absence of authority. For Chechens in particular, taking into consideration their ancient traditions and mentality, religion etc., it is impossible to use the tools and methods acquired from inferior and alien experience, which are imposed on us in the human rights sphere. Every country has problems in the human rights sphere. We must rely on our own historical and cultural experience. Blatant injustice has been committed towards us, the people of Chechnya, several times. We do not want it to happen again.

On what stage is the investigation of the murder of Natalia Estimirova, Zarema Sadulaeva and her husband?

This is out of my competence. This question should be addressed to the Investigative committee.

You're not interested in this topic?

We were all also questioned. This is one in a thousand of similar cases, it is no different than the rest. There are no politics here.

The deceased were involved in socially useful activities, that is why the cases have received so much attention. By the way, there are dozens of undisclosed sites of mass graves in the Republic. Many citizens of Chechnya suffer from similar open wounds.

However, these murders are connected to the professional activities of the deceased.

Of course, until the crimes are solved all sorts of leads and assumptions can be put forward. However, let's have patience and wait until the investigation is finished. It will put everything in its place.

You always defend Ramzan Kadyrov, and angrily rebuke all of

his critics. Probably I do not reveal any secret when I tell you that many people believe that you go beyond the human rights sphere, and even assume the functions of the press service of the President of the Republic.

My attitude towards the Kadyrov family is the attitude towards the people that saved the Chechen nation. I've been with them since 1996. Nobody "hooked me up" or got me that place. Before that I really wanted independence for the Republic. I was convinced that the Chechen people deserve it. I was appointed to the post of First deputy-prefect of the Gudermess district by the order of Maskhadov. I ran in the elections to the Parliament of Ichkeria. We had the opportunity of creating an independent state. However, we were unable to take advantage of this opportunity, and our people ended up in a historical dead-end. That is when the person who led the Chechen people out of that dead-end onto the road to salvation appeared. It was the first President of the Chechen Republic Akhmat-Khadzhi Kadyrov.

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In the history of the Chechen people there has never been an instance when the leaders asked the people what they wanted. A-Kh. Kadyrov was the only one that by the way of an all-people's referendum revealed what the citizens of the Republic really wanted. Do the people chose independence or do they want to remain a part of Russia? It was a brave step. Then, before the referendum, Akhmat - Khadzhi said : " Whatever the people decide, let it be so." And I am sure - if the people had decided differently back then, he would have done everything in his power to turn the people's will into reality. Akhmat-Khadzhi Kadyrov was the first to say: "Stop using the Chechen people for political gain!"

He was already openly against Wahhabism back in the times of

Ichkeria. I was very worried for him back then. Several of his bodyguards had been blown up, and I decided that I will be with him until the end. Akhmat- Khadzhi offered me several posts to chose from. I told him that I have been kidnapped twice, tortured, and that I would like to help victims such as myself. That is how I became a human rights activist.

Then I became part of his election campaign team. I remember as if it were yesterday how on October 4, 2003 Akhmat said: "If I become President tomorrow I will appoint Nukhazhiev to any post except that of the Minister of Health, since he is not a doctor". Then I repeated once again my request: "Allow me to do what I know best!"

Human rights protection - is a conscious choice for the rest of my life. And what is said about Kadyrov I perceive as being said about the whole Chechen nation, since he is the Head of the Republic and represents our people. As a citizen, he has the same right for defense against slander and insult as any other Russian citizen. Perhaps some people call me the

Ombudsman for the rights of Kadyrov, but for me he is truly a defender of the rights of the Chechen people. I believe that to be true and that is also my right.

If we take, for example, the recent story of street-children who are now studying at the cadet corps. He took care of them as if they were his own, and paid sincere attention to their needs. Or, another example - his visit to the prison in Chernokozovo village. After that visit the families of the convicts started receiving assistance, while the convicts themselves were handed out clothes, appropriate for prayer, as well as sports uniforms; a gym was constructed for them, as well as a mosque, funding was allocated to improve the quality of meals during the holy month of Ramadan.

It's true that Ramzan Kadyrov has very strict requirements to all leaders, but please note, that they are equally strict to all, without exception. He himself works 24/7. This disciplines the rest as well. In the reality of modern Chechnya no other way is possible. There is no time for slops.

What is your attitude towards the shootings of young women with uncovered heads, which took place last year?

You want me to be honest?

Preferably.

As a Chechen I condemn women, who grossly violate the Chechen traditional code of ethics. The fact that they were stained with paint etc. - that is the way that their peers chose to express that they do not like their fashion choices

Do ancient traditions really allow Chechen men to touch someone else's woman and point out something to her?

For any nation, especially right after a war and many tragedies, it is vitally important to abide by the requirements of public morality. It is, if anything, a unifying and mobilizing factor. Nowadays it is impossible to watch TV programs with your family. Is that really normal? Millions of people around the world are being convinced that it is. If we start forgetting about our roots, our traditions, we will disappear as a nation. There are some things for us Chechens, which are not subject to discussion.

Why do you believe wasn't it possible to help neither Zara Murtazalieva*, nor Lechi Dzhbanaraliev? Has there been any progress?**

The existing penitentiary system in Russia, is in essence, directed at the suppression of the personality. Law enforcement practice, especially in Chechen cases, is quite particular, selective. And here our abilities are limited. Fighting against a well-established system isn't that easy. In the cases mentioned release on parole would have been appropriate. By the way, Chechen nationals are hardly ever released on parole. We have appealed to the Chairman of the Supreme Court of

Russia Mr. Lebedev, on the subject. To their credit, the Supreme Court properly responded to our appeal, which I often attach to my appeals, when writing on similar matters to relevant institutions in other regions of Russia.

Human rights protection - is a conscious choice for the rest of my life. And what is said about Kadyrov I perceive as being said about the whole Chechen nation, since he is the Head of the Republic and represents our people. As a citizen, he has the same right for defense against slander and insult as any other Russian citizen.

Thousands of citizens of Chechnya are convicted for framed-up criminal cases. In addition to that, many of them have been tortured. I have sent a letter concerning this matter to the Chairman of the Legislation Commission of the Russian State Duma, Mr. Krashennikov. We are awaiting a meeting with him, in the course of which we are determined to present to him the materials of some cases such as these.

Is there a possibility to resolve this issue?

Before appealing to the State Duma, we were maintaining correspondence with the General Prosecutor's Office of Russia, which had done absolutely nothing to at least check the facts, set forth in our appeals. I personally handed over the documents to the Head of the Investigative Committee Mr. Bastrykin in the presence of the Head of the Republic and several representatives of the Ministry of Interior of Russia. Now we are waiting for their reaction. I presented the same documents to the Military Prosecutor's office. I hope that at least in the State Duma this issue will be considered.

On the eve of the elections to the State Duma we will do our best to demonstrate to the people the attitude of those that they have chosen to represent them, towards the fate of wrongly convicted persons. We are determined to provide mass media coverage of this process.

A great part of Russia's public opinion is not on the side of the Chechen people, even the wrongly convicted.

Our documents are addressed to the State Duma of the Russian Federation. They are intended for state officials, who are both enlightened and responsible.

We'll see what their reaction will be like.

We are not used to just sitting and doing nothing. The other problem is that Russia still has a very weak civil society. For example, in any civilized country, Zhirinovsky, would not have

spent another day in the Parliament, let alone in the chair of the Vice-speaker, after his xenophobic speeches.

But Zhirinovsky hasn't said anything new in a while: over the past twenty years he has made remarks that were a lot more insulting and racist either in his own speeches or in the statements of his party. And yet, inspite of that, a local branch of the LDPR Party was opened in Grozny and existed pretty well for many years. Why is the reaction displayed only now?

In the last twenty years we did not have time for Zhirinovsky and his kind. Now, fortunately, we have the opportunity of rebuking the clowns of politics. Thus, for example, pursuant to our claim, the Big Russian Encyclopedia was withdrawn from circulation. This would have been impossible a few years ago.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. We have yet to write our condolence books. It is our sacred duty, which we never forget about, not for a single moment.

1 Zara Murtazalieva - sentenced to 8,5 years in prison on what many human rights activists believe to be "trumped-up" charges of Terrorism.

2 Lechi Dzhbanaraliev - sentenced to 12,5 years in prison in 2005. He is serving his time (for a crime, which it is highly unlikely that he commit) in the Mordova colony IK-21.

According to the findings of a special medical commission from 19.03.2008, the convict Dzhbanaraliev suffers from medical conditions, which fall within the scope of p.23 "List of diseases, impeding the servicing of prison sentences", approved by the Government Decree №54 from 06.02.2004.

The official number of missing persons after the two wars - over 5000 people. However, according to unofficial data that number goes up as high as 18 000. The Grozny bureau of the DOSH journal keeps its regular column "We search and wait for you". From each of our issues our readers will be able to get acquainted with someone's story, which must not be forgotten.

Story № 5

The last memory of his father

The Uzarov family lived in the Stary village near Grozny, in a nice house on Shkolnaya street. They lived happily, until the political games of immoral politicians hadn't lead to one of the most cruel wars in modern history - a war against the Chechen people. The head of the family, Arab Saidovich Uzarov, born in 1949, dentist by profession, doctor by calling, was a very peaceful, hardworking person. When the war started he refused to believe for a very long time that the rumors about the cruelty of the Federal Army were true. The doctor, brought up in the spirit of internationalism and love for the human race, eternally loyal to the Hippocratic Oath, of course could barely grasp this horrifying reality. He could not believe that the state, which "granted freedom to the nations of the of the world" could so easily start a war in its own country. Arab Saidovich sent Maidat and the kids to the village of Alkhazurova, but he himself did not leave his home.

Very soon the unheard-of outrages of this war gained enormous proportions. Rumors of the executions, beatings and arsons reached Maidat. She hurried home, to Grozny... The poor woman did not yet know that she no longer had a home, that she would not find her husband there, and that this was just the beginning of a very long journey into the unknown. "The closer I got to home, the scarier the rumors became" - remembers Maidat. The villagers will remember the day of January 31, 1995 for the rest of their lives. Twenty-seven men were shot to death on the spot. If you happened to be home, you were to be shot - evidently such was the princi-

ple of that massacre. That day is often remembered and spoken about in the village: how the wounded and the dead lay together in the garage basements, how the poor women sat by the corpses of their husbands, guarding and protecting them from stray dogs...

The burial of the dead was impossible and the women were unable to do it.



Arab Uzarov with his eldest son Ruslan - 1983
Photo from the Uzarov family archive.



Struck with grief, they wandered from post to post, camped on the doorstep of the kommandatura, looking for at least a ray of hope that they could grasp onto. Maidat was among them.... She still remembers everything to the last detail. How she approached the house, or rather, the place where it once stood, and discovered mere ashes: everything that stood in the yard, including the parked cars, had burned down. A scary thought crossed her mind - "Perhaps Arab also burned to death?" However, the neighbors told her, that the federals took her husband away. Out of those who were taken away that day, only two haven't yet returned, and their bodies haven't been found: Arab and another doctor. According to eyewitness testimonies, Uzarov was led out of the house, then the yard was soaked in gasoline and set on fire.

Since then Maidat has looked for her husband everywhere - but in vain. She had been threatened, they tried to scare her, however nothing could stop her. Today she is awaiting the ruling of the court on this case. She has not received a compensation for the destroyed property. Looking at this woman, I didn't dare ask why she hadn't received the compensation, the sum of which, I must add in brackets, is in itself insulting. The grief from losing a loved one in such circumstances is impossible to measure, and the desolate unknown that has already been dragging on for years is horrifying to even imagine. My conscience did not allow me to question her further.

- If there was only something... at least some lead... - were her last words to me. Like an echo of eternal expectation.

Story № 6

They demanded money for my son

From the very first moment you see Zainap Batalova you know - she is in grief. Her face is striking. Her eyes do not trust people. As far as she is concerned the world is a cruel and ruthless place. But she tells you everything, and is ready to do so over and over again, as if she has hope that her confession might help someone. Her three sons, the Tashaev brothers, have disappeared; Musa, born in 1975, Aidi, born in 1978 and Salambek, born in 1984.

Her family lived in a Chechen village called Tangi-chu, located in the Urus-Martonovsky district, that very village, in which Colonel Budanov committed his heinous crime. It was very hard to survive in this village. People tried to survive and did their best to ignore the abuse from the insolent soldiers, the hardships of life under barbaric occupation. For Zainap the most important thing was that her children were alive and well. She was ready to endure hunger and deprivation, as long as her sons were not affected by all of the horrors and misfortunes of the war. Musa lived in Urus-Martan, on 100 Titov street. He helped the whole family by making some money in the private service station that he had in his backyard. He lived with his wife and two daughters. However, is it possible to hide from war and all of the mischief that it brings? On November 20 at four o'clock in the morning he was taken away from his home by people in camouflage. First the lights went out, then they broke in and grabbed Musa, who was practically naked, in different house slippers.

- I started looking for him at once

Zainap goes quiet, as if remembering those many months that she spent trying to learn something about the fate of

her son. What state officials hadn't she visited back, who hadn't she begged for help in finding her son! It was all useless. Of course at once several "well wishers" appeared out of nowhere and offered to provide the grief-stricken mother with information about the whereabouts of her son in exchange for 100 dollars. Then the price rose to 20 000 rubles. Then even worse - to 1000 dollars. Tortured with fear for her son she gave these villains money, and yet up until this day she still has no information about the fate of Musa.

Not much more can be said about the fate of her second son Aidi, officer of the Department of Internal Affairs of the Zavodskoy District. Aidi disappeared eight months after Musa. At first, on July 23, 2001 Zainap was told that her wounded son was brought to the 9th Grozny City Hospital, and that he was there. Zainap understood that work in the police forces is dangerous, especially at a difficult time like this, but she was unable to convince her son to quit. Now she was determined to insist that he resign as soon as he gets better. However, Aidi was not to be found in the hospital. There she was told that indeed, on July 23 they received a wounded police officer Aidi Tashaev, but already at 10 o'clock in the morning of July 24 he was taken away from the hospital by armed men in camouflage.

The mother ran to the District Department of Internal Affairs in vain hope that her son was taken away by his colleagues, however they were unaware of the fact that Aidi was no longer in the hospital Since then she has shed so many tears, seen so many heartless, shameless, insolent people with and without uniform that there is nothing in



the world that could amaze or startle her - Then came the turn of Salambek.

Zainap went silent. All those present were quietly sobbing. I looked at her and could not understand why I felt such bitter emptiness inside. I was also crying. I wanted to tell these women that I am also a mother, that I feel their pain, but instead merely asked about the fate of Salambek.


His mother no longer possessed the strength to talk. Another woman answered for her, that there was no information about his fate either. Then the women told me about how incredibly painful it is to talk about this, to relive this nightmare all over again. "And probably to search" - I thought to myself. One of the women obviously read my mind and said that it wasn't difficult to search, it was difficult to share with strangers. It was then that I suddenly understood why Zainap always retired into herself and why I got that empty feeling inside: I was one of the strangers, one of those who asked questions and forced her to relive her agony time and time again, agony which I would never be able to imagine or grasp, no matter how hard I tried. This realization didn't make me feel any better, it only deepened the feeling of guilt, although I had nothing to feel guilty about...

However, when the triumph of evil is so explicit, can anyone really be considered innocent, if we consider ourselves to be a part of society and not merely grains of sand in the eternal universe?

Maret ELDIEVA

«Уверенные взыскательные 3-е мои родственники: брат, сестра и дядя, которые подверглись пыткам и унижениям в моем присутствии / брата и дядю избивали в сестру градили из неслыхан перед нами, с целью получения от меня признательных показаний в преступлениях которые я не совершал. И после подписания мною недействительного документа о совершении преступлений / которые я не совершал, и от меня свидетели ОВД / их отпустили, но затем они были похищены из дома семьи. Не сотрудничая ни, доставлены в ИВС / после их освобождения по этому бескавалерию в прокуратуру и ФССБ по Д.Р. / и по все время их местонахождение неизвестно, прошу более 9-лет. Уголовные дела / № 57005 № 57006 / по факту их похищения возбуждены 8 января 2002, с момента至今已 прошло более 9-лет. В настоящее время в прокуратуре и следствии они переданы / не оставлены вольнобегущим прокурорским следственным работникам 9-лет / где они кого-либо в настоящее время по документальному больше 6-лет / с 2008 года неосуществимы контакты мой мать / родственники / в настоящее время / в Р.Н.А.О. / до 5-го года дата показаний / раме о конкретном / родственниках, в таком / другую след. действий / Все мои обязанности / инициативы / обращения по Д.Р. / прошу более 9-лет / неосуществимы, в нем по Д.Р. по все 20

«Уверенные взыскательные 3-е мои родственники: брат, сестра и дядя, которые подверглись пыткам и унижениям в моем присутствии / брата и дядю избивали в сестру градили из неслыхан перед нами, с целью получения от меня признательных показаний в преступлениях которые я не совершал. И после подписания мною недействительного документа о совершении преступлений / которые я не совершал, и от меня свидетели ОВД / их отпустили, но затем они были похищены из дома семьи. Не сотрудничая ни, доставлены в ИВС / после их освобождения по этому бескавалерию в прокуратуру и ФССБ по Д.Р. / и по все время их местонахождение неизвестно, прошу более 9-лет. Уголовные дела / № 57005 № 57006 / по факту их похищения возбуждены 8 января 2002, с момента至今已 прошло более 9-лет. В настоящее время в прокуратуре и следствии они переданы / не оставлены вольнобегущим прокурорским следственным работникам 9-лет / где они кого-либо в настоящее время по документальному больше 6-лет / с 2008 года неосуществимы контакты мой мать / родственники / в настоящее время / в Р.Н.А.О. / до 5-го года дата показаний / раме о конкретном / родственниках, в таком / другую след. действий / Все мои обязанности / инициативы / обращения по Д.Р. / прошу более 9-лет / неосуществимы, в нем по Д.Р. по все 20

 <p>ФЕДЕРАЛЬНАЯ СЛУЖБА ИСПОЛНЕНИЯ НАКАЗАНИЙ УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ПО ЯМАЛО-НЕНЕЦКОМУ АВТОНОМНОМУ ОКРУГУ</p>		<p>Редакция журнала Дош Главному редактору</p>
<p>ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ БЮДЖЕТНОЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ ИСПРАВИТЕЛЬНАЯ КОЛОНИЯ № 18 (ФБУ ИК-18 УФСИН РОССИИ ПО ЯНАО) п. Харп Приуральский район, Ямало-Ненецкий автономный округ 629420 тел/факс: (34993) 72-640</p>		<p>103982 г. Москва пер. Лучников, 4-3-1</p>
<p>Направляю в Ваш адрес заявление осужденного к плс Тимербулатова Мехди Магомедовича с просьбой опубликовать в журнале письмо о пропаже родственников. (При направлении ответа просьба ссылаться на наш исх. №)</p>		
<p>Приложение: заявление на 1л., документы на 4л.</p>		
<p>Зам. начальника по БОР капитан внутренней службы</p>		<p>Р.С. Буньков</p>
<p>исп. Гучок Л.А.</p>		

To the Head
of the Chechen Republic
R.A. Kadyrov,
Grozny
From M.M. Timerbulatov,
Kharp village Ik -18
Y.N.A.D.

VICTIMS OF LAWLESSNESS

Dear Ramzan Akhmatovich!
Tragic circumstances have forced me to appeal to you, the Head of Chechnya, that is the last instance in the Republic. I am forced to ask you, as the leader of our long-suffering people, to pay personal attention to the inactivity of the investigative authorities and the prosecutor's office of the Chechen Republic. Today it is only in your power to force

the legal authorities of the Republic, which have thus far been completely indifferent to the fate of my missing relatives, to carry out their direct duties. I am the brother of Ali Magomedovich and Tamara Magomedovna Timerbulatov, who were abducted by police officers of the Gudermess Department of Internal Affairs in January 2002.

The husband of my sister, S.-Kh. Magomedov, was also abducted along with them and has been missing since. Before that, 13.08.2001, during one of the so-called "mopping-up" operations I had been detained in the Belorechie village of the Gudermess District and was placed in a temporary detention facility of the Gudermess District Department of Internal Affairs.

At that time, in order to support the unfounded criminal charges pressed against me, the police detained and retained in a temporary detention facility of the Gudermess Department of Internal Affairs my relatives, that I have mentioned above: my brother, sister and brother-in-law. They were tortured and humiliated before my very eyes. The two men were beaten, and my sister was threatened to be raped in front of them. All of this was done in order to force me to give a confessional statement, which I did, even though I did not commit the crime. When I signed everything that the officers wanted me to sign, my relatives were set free, but were abducted later on from their homes by the same officers and brought to the same facility. This occurred after they filed a complaint about the police lawlessness to the Prosecutor's office and Federal Security Service Directorate of the Republic. Nine years have past since then, and there is still no information available about their whereabouts.

Criminal cases № 57005 and № 57006 were initiated on charges of abduction in January 2002. At first they remained in the prosecution agencies of the city of Gudermess without any investigation undertaken. Then, in 2009, in accordance with Art. 61 of the Criminal Procedural Code RF they were transferred for further proceedings to the investigative department of Grozny (Garazhnaya st., 9b), where they remain without any investigation whatsoever.

In 2008 (more than six years after the cases were initiated!) after many efforts, petitions and motions my mother and myself were recognized as victims in these cases.

At the moment I am serving a life sentence in the FBU Ik -18 (Federal budgetary institution, Penal colony 18), Kharp village, Y.N.A.D. For over ten years now I have been trying to succeed in getting the opportunity to testify against certain people, who had kid-

All these years the prosecution and investigative agencies of the Republic have sent my petitions to each other back and forth, supposedly for further consideration, thus delaying the investigation of the case, most probably with a view for the application of Art. 24 of the Criminal Procedural Code on the Statute of Limitations. They would really do anything in order to prevent the bringing to justice of those police officers responsible for the abduction of my relatives

napped my relatives, as well as the right to participate in other investigative actions related to these cases. All these years the prosecution and investigative agencies of the Republic have sent my petitions to each other back and forth, supposedly for further consideration, thus delaying the investigation of the case, most probably with a view for the application of Art. 24 of the Criminal Procedural Code on the Statute of Limitations. They would really do anything in order to prevent the bringing to justice of those police officers responsible for the abduction of my relatives. I know these people personally or by name. I have repeatedly mentioned their full names and titles. In accordance with the law my statements demand serious attention and through examination, for they do after all concern the commission of especially grave crimes by police officers

I have approached the law enforcement agencies with the following request: if they do not wish to allow me to take part in investigative actions on the spot, in face-to-face interrogations, identifications etc., that they send an investigator involved in these cases on a mission to complete to the full extent all of the necessary investigatory actions with my participation. However, this request of mine has also been denied. Most probably, because I would be able to identify and indicate the culprits, and thus impede that the investigative authorities continue to act out ignorance.

We, the relatives of the abducted, do not receive any information on what measures have been undertaken by the law enforcement agencies in investigating these cases: we have been completely denied access to them. Based on all of this, we have no other choice but to conclude that nothing has been

done and that this inactivity is maliciously intentional. And yet, according to the law, criminals, if proven guilty, must bear responsibility for the misdoings that they have committed, regardless of their status.

Dear Ramzan Akhmatovich, I ask you to take into consideration, that the disappearance of three absolutely innocent people, my relatives, in addition to everything else, is a never-ending nightmare for their children, who are now orphans, and for their family members, who suspect that their loved ones are dead, but are deprived of the opportunity to bury them and to mourn for them, since they do not have proof of their decease.

The children and relatives of the abducted, myself included, are all suffering in endless anticipation, which is causing anguish, which does not subside with time, and has been tormenting us for over ten years now. Meanwhile, the police officers responsible for our sufferings, who grossly violated the law, which they are meant to protect, are enjoying absolute impunity.

Dear Ramzan Akhmatovich! I am asking for your help, for your assistance in finally restoring justice. I sincerely hope that your immense personal authority will not let officials of the investigation department and the Prosecutor's office of the Chechen Republic, to lie to you as they have lied so far, taking advantage of our helplessness. And if they do, your statesmanship and wisdom will not let deception triumph once again. Our last hope is that after your interference in the cases of our missing relatives, which have been pending lawful investigation for so many years, this process will finally be taken seriously.

Sincerely, M.M. Timerbulatov
01.02.2011

THE SHADOW OF THE PRESIDENT OF ICHKERIA

The following material is based on the diary that I kept during my mission to Chechnya as part of the Ryazan OMON in 2001. It's a documentary. I will not write about politics, I would simply like to offer the opportunity of viewing the operation of 2001 through the eyes of a federal.

On March 8 of this year it will be six years since the death of the last elected President of Ichkeria, Aslan Maskhadov. This year will also commemorate another event - the 10 year anniversary of the beginning of a extensive operation to capture Maskhadov in the Nozhai-Yurta district of Chechnya in the autumn of 2001.

These two events are connected to each other through a negative contrast - in 2001 the federals had a chance to kill Maskhadov, but let him go, while conducting an extensive, and highly confusing operation in the mountains. In 2005 they had the chance (most probably) to capture him, but killed him, while conducting a fairly low-key, and yet no less confusing operation in Tolstoi-Yurt.

Large-scale Mopping-up Operation

At the beginning of October 2001 we were located in a school of the Zandak village of the Nozhai-Yurt district. On one of the days an unknown group, the "wild muts" military intelligence (as they called themselves) as we later learned -

entrenched themselves on a neighboring hill. They appeared very abruptly - at night a BRDM, with its passengers completely drunk, rode up to our location. As it turned out they took a wrong turn, and left. It's almost equivalent to suicide to ride around at night, in the mountains, HERE, and in such a state...

In the morning we saw them on a neighboring mountain - already entrenched.

On one of the days, MI-24 choppers started bombarding the gorge, close to Yaryk-Su. Must have shot a whole wagon of free-flight rockets - a couple of choppers left the site to reload, and were immediately replaced by another pair. We watched this diabolically beautiful process from the roof of the school - the smoke from shots swirled around their propellers, forming beautiful shapes, and was followed by the sound of shots and an explosion a few seconds later. The choppers practically flew under our feet - a bit further down the gorge.

After that we were all quickly loaded onto trucks and rushed to the village of Baitarki. The military column started all the way back from Gilyani. A large

quantity of military equipment, a great variety of different branches of troops. General Bogdanovskiy was in charge of the operation. He met us near Simsir and explained what was going on.

This is what it all more or less looked like...

Here we go!

The last orders have been given. The routes have been discussed and analyzed. The weapons have been examined. The President of Ichkeria is now hiding somewhere on the slopes of these mountains, with a small group of bodyguards. On the one hand it is kind of hard to believe that such an important figure in the camp of the "irreconcilables" can act in such an irresponsible manner: to wander under the very nose of the federals with merely a small group of fighters. On the other hand, why be amazed, these are the Caucasus, where the relationship within one teip (clan) is strong like nowhere else. This is difficult for us to understand. As we later understood from random phrases dropped by various FSB officers, Maskhadov had come to visit one of his

relatives, living in the Tatai-Khutor village. I wouldn't be amazed, if he had come here merely to wish some elderly Nokhcho a happy birthday. It is very common among them. They travel through all of Dagestan and Chechnya in order to "pay their respects" to one of the highly-respected senior wise men, and have to leave only after an hour. Such are the Caucasus. (later it became known that Maskhadov had come for a different reason- to give his condolences - author's note)

One way or another, after the radio intercept, the region was blocked. So many military units of the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the FSB and GRU showed up, as if the disfavored President had come here with at least an entire division of mercenaries. The nearby villages are located on different altitudes. The Baitarky village was named the center of the operation. Our commander was particularly fond of it - a good natural fortress. The staff of the operation was also located here. The troops reserve (which in reality was more of an increased security force for the high-ranking staff commanders), the ammunition stocks, the stop for military equipment etc. The local villagers hadn't seen such concentration of people in uniform in several years. The last time was when Raduev was retreating from the territory of Dagestan. Since 1998 there hadn't been any real battles in this village either. Only bombardments. Sometimes a mortar round accidentally makes it to the village, or some pilot has confused the coordinates again.

The "Search" started advancing. On the forefront (those who have the best aim) are the OMON, the intelligence services of the Ministry of Defense, the GRU special forces and the forces attached to them. The rest of the units are providing encirclement, cover and supporting fire. Two "crocodiles" (that is the tender way that the chopper of airborne supporting fire MI-24 is called) are spitting out "warmers"

(rocket-traps against ZENIT complexes with infra-red guidance) into the air. They climb up the steep mountain sides, then sore back down into the depths of the gorge, rumbling, tumbling and letting out smoke. When they dive in our direction time after time and rush by right over our heads, you cannot help but think to yourself: "Guys, just try not to mix up "us" with "them"! And, when thinking about "us: you think, with a certain degree of alarm: God forbid that anyone confuse the colors of the signal rockets, when everything "begins"! This has happened at war before. It's a shame to die from your own rockets.

Once again you realize that mountainous areas are a perfect terrain for conducting such wars. All the power of the ammunition seems so petty, even comical, the aviation (the planes often fly below the level of dirt, stuck to the soles of our rubber boots) is simply weak here. Every valley, each crack in the cliff, each clump of bolders - is a perfect firing position. If planned wisely, even a small unit can fight off superior forces during quite a long period of time. We know this and "they" know this. Not yet seen by any of the participants of the operation, but already materialized in our conversations, "they" were experienced opponents.

The people who are accepted into Maskhadov's personal guard are not there for money and are not contract-soldiers. They have nothing to lose. They do not become prisoners and do not take prisoners. Upon leaving the point of control, from which all of the "searchers" had embarked on their paths, many bad thoughts enter my mind. Will my relatives receive the insurance payments? Will my wife be able to get the money that I had deposited in the bank before leaving? How will my family react? In case.... This is war, you must consider all of the possibilities

Serega was right when he suggested this morning that we wear rubber boots - there's dirt all over the place!



Our feet would have gotten wet a long time ago if we had worn "quarters". I should do my best not to slip off the trail Apart from getting dirt all over yourself, the "fall" might last several minutes, and too much time will be spent on "collecting" me. Nervously, covering for each other, we pass by an accumulation of bushes. An ideal position. We are like in a shooting gallery. And there's nowhere to go: only the abyss on the right, and we still haven't grown any wings. How on earth does anything even grow on these rocks? It seems like someone is peering at us from behind them. What are you waiting for? Do it while we haven't taken up our positions yet. Too late now, Mr. Nokhcho, the machine gunners are in place, the snipers have dispersed (the guys are great - they "dissolve" before your very eyes). Lekha and I, as well as two soldiers (one of which has optical aim on his machinegun) go to check and clear the bushes.

You start feeling like a piece of meat - bait. Of course our guys will let "them" have it later. If our group starts to lose ground, our guys will come and help. Plus, look at the choppers, circling around, as if they're only waiting for the command to attack. But all of this will come LATER. In cleanup operations those who have found the enemy usually die. In accordance with the established internal procedure it is bestowed upon me to check, what is behind the bushes.

I swear quietly to myself: I'd just washed my "sklon" (protective special forces suit) the day before yesterday. I press myself into the cold, damp clay.



When peering into the "blind" zone there should be as little of me as possible. It would be great if I could become completely flat. I stick my head out. No one. I've just noticed that I hadn't been breathing for the past minute. I stand up and waive the "all clear" gesture to everyone. I exit very carefully - everyone is "on the edge", they'll still have to check and clear later on.

We move forward. I hear the conversation of the 14th and 15th search parties over the radio. It appears that they have found each other, are now in place and keep talking. The maps of the routes are very inaccurate. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to avoid starting the battle with our own. Assistance will come to all. They'll "help", and, once the situation is clarified the "200s"(dead) and "300s" (wounded) are both possibilities. To die from the bullets of your own men is just as big of a shame as dying from the rockets of our choppers.

Some maniac is approaching from below on a grey UAZ minibus - ambulance. We read the words on the "forehead" of the car - "Happy". The Omsk cops have definitely gone completely mad. It really is them - Vakha is grinning behind the wheel. What the hell are they doing here? It's scary to walk here, let alone drive a car. The road is by a cliff - eagles are soaring. The car has stopped beside us. Serega, the Commander of the Omsk Unit, also the Head of the Village police station from

a nearby settlement, offered to "give us a lift." These Omsk police inspectors are absolutely reckless! Especially after "trying" a bit of Kizlyar cognac. The proposal was accepted just as politely as the cognac offered by the guys from Omsk. They, in their turn, were treated to some Ossetian vodka. The ride was absolutely great! Even despite the fact that the road is very bumpy. The main objective is not to look out the window, the one that overlooks the abyss. Why get nervous when there is no need? All is in the hands of fate. If the car slips off the road nobody will have the opportunity to do anything.

We didn't get far - got stuck on axles. Instead of a track there are two deep canals from two brooks that passed through here a short while ago. We will not be able to get the car out on our own. We leave Vakha - a local driver, assigned to the Omsk police officers by the commandant's office of the region. We gave him a few magazine cases, a grenade, one rocket and told him to run away at the first sign of trouble. I hope our snipers won't shoot holes in him - he does have a Chechen face.

The first house along our way. Not everything coincides with the map, but here that's normal. We "disperse to our positions" just like we had been taught. I regret every time not being a machine-gunner or a sniper - they don't have to enter the houses. Carrying that "thing" around, plus a bag of bullets around the mountains isn't that fun

- that can be read in the eyes of the machine-gunner. As we pass from house to house, we do it by spurting or crawling, but Gena walks straightened up - he is so tired that his feeling of danger is numbed. Just like from "grass": You don't give a damn about anything. You have to have cast-iron health to be a machine-gunner.

The positions are taken. We have the "suicide" places in the "Abscess group". Six of us go. I'm second, and judging by the distance will enter the house closer to the tail of the group. If anything happens, perhaps I'll get lucky and will have a chance to crawl away. The officer in command of the operation was very clear in his instructions: at the slightest sign of trouble all must withdraw and burn down the house using all methods available. Then give the coordinates to the choppers, launch a rocket and retreat. No need for heroic gestures and risks. "They" will fight fiercely and to the end. The soldier covering the machine-gunner took out a "mukha" and placed it under his arm. Ah, Gena is already threatening him with his fist, as if trying to say "don't burn our own people down". Sasha has reached the door and knocked. A young boy, around thirteen years old, opened the door. No, probably younger than that. He would look like he's thirteen if he were Russian. Here, the boys grow up a lot faster. He doesn't speak a word of Russian. Of course, the war has been going on for most of his short life, the schools are closed, and everyone around him speaks in Chechen. We call the interpreter. Ilias, a militia man from the Nozhai - Yurt commandant's office, approaches us. Our "Chechen supervision"- attached forces. After the conversation with the "youngster" he screamed something into the house.

Sanek grabs him by the throat. The croaking 'interpreter' quietly explains that there are only women and children inside. He yelled that everyone should exit the house, because the Russians need to inspect it. Three



women with four toddlers exit in a couple of minutes. Everybody silently steps 20 meters away from the building and stop. Romka, the second machine-gunner, is trying to ask one of the women if there is anyone left in the house. There is silence. Then he asks whether armed people in uniform, have recently passed through here. Silence. The young "dzhigit" is smiling. They will not tell anything to anyone, especially in front of him.

For some reason I suddenly remembered the movie "White sun of the dessert". Women of the East. The house is poor, like practically everything in the villages of the Republic. It's made up of "Samoni" (bricks made in forms out of clay, maneur, straw, and mixed by horse shoes). The rooftop is made of straw. The children's toys made out of wood, scraps of clothes, wire, clay are stuck in my memory. All clear. We thoroughly searched all of the sheds, bathrooms (sometimes an underground passage from a bathroom to another part of town), we even knocked on the floors. We did everything we could here. In response to the question about the whereabouts of the man of the house, the young boy answered that he has left to Nozhai Yurt, to earn money. It would be really nice if it were so. You just never know, perhaps he is looking at us right now through a sniper's aim.

Genka is approached by a child. A little girl, her face and hands in flour. She was helping her mother bake lavash. Upon seeing her, everybody remembered their own kids. A moment of weakness. A flash of anger. At everyone. Anger at our government, at the insurgents, the commanders, at the management, at Maskhadov, Eltsin. WHEN IS THIS EVER GOING TO END? WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?

Oh man, it's really bad when you have such thoughts at the beginning of

an operation. I tune myself onto a battle wave - there's still some vodka left in the flask. I briefly glanced over at the eyes of "our" men. I think that they too had such provocative thoughts. Genka retrieved a candy bar somewhere from the depths of his ammunitions vest, and offered it to the child. Her mother suddenly rushed in and took her away into her own "Security pile". They all seem like sheep now, which are being attacked by wolves. They all gathered together, put the kids in the middle. They didn't accept the candy. I too wouldn't have accepted to take something from someone I don't know.

Final

This madness lasted for almost two weeks. Although already on the third day, I believe, everybody knew that Maskhadov had left with his military force to Georgia. Or he was allowed to leave.

During the past week we made believe that we were all working. We sat in different groups in different houses, drank tea, spoke through the radio stations, about who was "cleaning" now and where. Thus, once I noticed a group in the neighboring yard, with which we had agreed to meet after completing the patrol of the village a few minutes ago. At first we were scared, of course, assuming that we have discovered a group of insurgents. But it turned out to be OK. They were also one of ours. They are doing the same thing we are - they are making believe that they are conducting a mopping-up operation. Even the locals had already gotten used to us, and would say "Guys, they have left a long time ago." As if we hadn't already known that! But what can you really say. The general officers still has hope for something, although it looks like they too are just simulating intensive activity.

Maskhadov was released. Or he managed to leave on his own, although a

large network was created against him. I still believe that if it had been "necessary", they would have been able to capture him.

And here is the story of March 8, 2005... I do not believe that the President of Ichkeria was supposedly shot by one of his relatives upon his own request. Maskhadov is an officer. I would understand if he had died in battle or by self-detonation, but not like this. I also find it hard to believe that it was impossible to capture him alive in the Tolsti-Yurt

Everything is too precise. When you think about it Raduev immediately comes to mind. How could he die? Only one explanation suggests itself - these people knew too much of what should not be known. Then too many conclusions can be drawn. And not just about these wars.

The FSB Special Forces captivated Maskhadov's relatives in Tolsti Yurt. It is highly dubious that they could not capture him alive. It's something else. Perhaps, that they no longer needed a person, who possessed the status of the legitimate President of Ichkeria, with whom an agreement could have been reached. An agreement had already been reached on Khasavurt.

And I am convinced, that if it had been wanted, the war could have been ended, together with Maskhadov.

But... War for some is fortune for others. The death of some means millions to others.

Now you can yell at the top of your lungs: "The war is over!", but is it in fact so? (No matter how many times you say "KHALVA!"...). For people dying in the Caucasus, as well as in terrorist attacks in other regions of Russia, in airports, the subway, at the market, these triumphant empty words will not mean a thing.

*Dmitry FLORIN,
participant of the operation of 2001*



CYBER – DAGESTAN

On February 22 in Vladikavkaz, at the meeting of the National Anti-terrorist Committee the Head of Dagestan Magomedsalam Magomedov reported to the President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev that hundreds of extremist websites are active on the territory of his Republic. Hence, Magomedov proposed a technical way of winning the ideological war - to limit Internet access. Medvedev was strongly against blocking the network and suggested instead that they should create their own websites, which could serve as fora for Muslims leaders to express themselves.

In proposing such an initiative to the Head of State the President of Dagestan was not so much seeking his approval of further actions, but rather trying to get the approbation of those committed in the past. In reality, some restrictions are already in place, and special websites under the common slogan "Our response to the extremists" are already functioning in Dagestan.

Dagestan, falling behind the rest of Russia in terms of the main socio-economic indicators, surprisingly is not falling behind in terms of freedom of speech and the development of an information society. According to the experts in terms of the number of active Internet users, Dagestan is in the top ten regions of the country. In 2008 - 2009 around 700 km of fiber-optic communication lines have been installed in the Republic. Several major providers are active in Makhachkala, practically every house in the capital is either connected to a fiber-optical line or is located at accessible distance to it. Taking into consideration that the Internet is mostly used by the youth,

which is very socially active, and whose minds are what the ideologists are fighting for, the concerns of the Head of the Republic about the excessive amount of extremist site are understandable.

The most famous among such websites is the "Caucasian Knot". This creation of Movladi Udugov has been working since 1999. Since then it has repeatedly been attacked by hackers. According to Wikipedia, at the moment, certain Russian internet providers are denied access to this website. However, there are ways to get around the Internet censorship. Apart from the "Caucasian Center", the propaganda of terrorism is carried out by "Chechnya on-line", "Information center of Ichkeria", "Chechen jihad", "Elite forces of Muslim Hackers."

We took this list from an article entitled "Cyber jihad", which was published (without ownership) on the antipode-website "Center-Caucasus". This antiterrorist resource publishes reports about operations against insurgents, dossier on field commanders, instruc-

tions on how one should act in a hostage situation and when traveling abroad (although the latter points have merely been identified, there is no information yet under these headings). Even though the information about the founders and creators of the website isn't posted, its affiliations can be easily figured out based on the "hotline" numbers of the regional offices of the FSB, EMERCOM, Ministry of Interior, published on the home page, and by the fact that on the "Interview" page you see Nikolay Patrushev and Alexander Bortnikov. People in the Republic are so accustomed to the anonymous mode in which the secret services operate, that the pro-government website RIA "Dagestan" calmly publishes a piece of news concerning the fact that certain unknown designers of the website "Center-Caucasus" have sent an appeal to the Congress of the People of Dagestan, in which they offered in the name of the Congress to address the Federal authorities with a legislative initiative - "to introduce into the RF Law about the Media, a norm which

allows to limit , by judicial procedure, the access of the subscribers of the provider to internet websites, which allow for the publishing of extremist materials."

Meanwhile, although these amendments have not been adopted, the access has been partially limited in Dagestan to the the "Caucasian Knot" Information Agency, the Dagestani weekly edition of "Chernovik" and several other resources. The providers inform of the order of the Republican office of the Federal Security Service Directorate and the Prosecutor's office about blocking the websites due to their involvement in the dissemination of extremist materials. It's noteworthy, that not all providers have introduced restrictions. In particular, the subscribers of "Summa - Telekom" were out of luck.

Another anonymous internet-source, that has created quite a stir among the Dagestan journalists, is the blog called "Cyberunit-801". For now it only has one post, which drags through the mud all of the most famous journalists and Human Rights Activists, who had spoken against the lawlessness and the abuse of power by the law enforcement agencies, but the blog promises a continuation and even named the future heroes, among whom are several famous lawyers. Thus, not only the accusatory pathos , but also the image of the enemy brings closer together the creators of the blog and the authors of the leaflet that had appeared in Makhachkala a year and a half ago. The leaflet contained threats addressed to Human Rights activists, lawyers and journalists, who at one point or another

had criticized the work of the law enforcement agencies.

But a lot more fuss was caused by another Internet story. In September, a 13-year-old girl was kidnapped and raped in Khasavurt. Despite the fact that she had named her kidnappers, the investigation dragged on. The mother of the girl started to suspect that the investigators are trying to protect the criminals and free them of all responsibility. In January she went to the Human Rights activists. As a result an article appeared on one of the blogs. Links to that article started travelling from forum to forum. The users of the "Odnoklassniki" network and of the Anzhie Football fanclub turned out to be the most active of them all. They wrote letters to the High Commissioner on Human Rights of Russia, as well as to other instances, started collecting money for the victim and organized a rally, which was not only an act of protest, but also a possibility to meet and discuss future actions. But the main objective has already been achieved - the indignation of the people has been heard, the President of Dagestan took this case under his personal control, the three suspects have been taken into custody, one has been placed on the wanted list. Thus, the Internet is becoming a real force to be reckoned with in Dagestan, which is still not controlled by the government. However, the Republic authorities are aware of this problem and are determined to shake up the balance of power on the Internet.

- It is unacceptable when extremists, radicals, leaders of banned organizations have the opportunity to propa-

gate their ideas and brainwash the youth through extremist websites on the Internet. They have to receive an adequate response from our side, from the state authorities, from the mass media, from the community - said Magomedsalam Magomedov on February 3 during the meeting of the Council on the development of the information society under the President of the Republic of Dagestan. - We will create a special structure, which will be responsible for dealing with such issues.

(By the way, in their appeal to the Congress the designers of the anti-terrorist website also spoke of the need to initiate the creation of a special center for the management of the Internet in the Republic.)

The Directorate on information technologies of the Government of Dagestan has prepared a "Plan of Action for the development of the information society and the creation of an electronic government in the Republic for a three-year period." The drafters of the Plan requested an enormous amount of money for its realization - 1,9 billion rubles. Such expenses are not foreseen in the budget, however the President of Dagestan stated that "there is money", however, private funding should also be considered.

At the same meeting a representative of the Federal Security Service Directorate Sergey Kolomeitsev stated that his institution "has very good technological facilities since last year", and urged state officials to address him for consultations.

Aida GADZHIEVA

UDI
Utlendingsdirektoratet
Intervju

DEPORTATION FROM NORTHERN EUROPE

On January 26 of this year 50 Chechen refugees were deported from Norway. This act was massive and violent in character, and was directed not only against young men, but women as well. Many of the women had babies on their hands, some born already here, in the North of Europe.

The Deportation was accompanied by actions, which shocked the local Chechen Diaspora. The people (in keeping with the best Russian traditions!) were grabbed at night. Their homes were stormed by policemen in bullet-proof vests and special ammunition. Without giving them time to pack their things, the refugees were taken under heavy escort to "Trandum" - a transit prison-like camp near the Oslo Airport. The whole country was engulfed by these targeted operations, if we resort to the terminology used by the Russian special forces in the Northern Caucasus. The authorities did not pay any attention to the fact that although many of the people being deported had been declined asylum, they had already filed for their cases to be reconsidered and hadn't yet received a response.

Moreover, some of them had received documents from Human Rights Organizations, which stated that for them deportation to Russia was highly undesirable.

At the very last moment, right before embarking on the plane, one family was freed. According to the testimony of these people, that the prison conditions were absolutely appalling. The cells were quite cold. The children were crying from hunger, since their parents were not allowed to take the baby food from their bags packed for the road. Instead, the policemen brought food, but unfamiliar, unusual food, especially for infants. The children refused to eat it and cried a lot. One child burned himself with boiling water, but did not receive the necessary treatment. They applied bandages to the burn and sent the boy and his mother out of the country in that state. The people who were brought to the "Trandum" center were not permitted to contact their relatives. The first thing that the policemen did at the moment of arrest was retrieve, wrest mobile phones. Nobody could notify their families about their whereabouts, nor ask to be met at the airport in Moscow, where, we must remind you, a

terrorist act had taken place the day before. But even that did not stop the Norwegian authorities. The explosion in Domodedovo airport did not make them postpone the expulsion of the refugees even by one day. Everything was done with cold European punctuality. If only they acted with the same punctuality when considering asylum requests...

Among the people deported from Norway there was a man, that had lost several of his relatives, who were executed without investigation or trial at different moments in time. There were also people, who dared to file complaints against Russia to the European Court of Human Rights, after violence had been committed against their families and managed to win these cases. It is said, that all of this can be explained by the fact that from now on there are new rules of considering immigration petitions, based on an individual, rather than a group approach. This rule applies not only to Chechens, but rather to all refugees, arriving in

Norway from disadvantaged countries. Perhaps it is so. However, according to our information, there were cases when the decision about a definite decline of the petition had been made already after the people to be deported had been placed by the police in a camp. Before that the migration services had assured them that their cases were being considered and that there was no need to worry.

Besides, this deportation is only a final point at the end of a lengthy process of reevaluation of the attitude towards Russia and the events in the Northern Caucasus. To some extent similar reevaluations took place in many European countries, and had the greatest effect first and foremost on the people, seeking refuge there. Incidents when they were denied refuge and sent back to their home countries have become a lot more frequent. However, nowhere was this process so harsh and abrupt - going from an almost 100% rate of positive decisions in refuge cases to practically the same 100% in denials. There is no point in trying to come up with various theories on why Norway's attitude towards refugees from the Northern Caucasus has changed. I dare to assume that at the core of it are politics. Less than a year has passed since the signing of an agreement with Russia on the establishment of the borderline in the waters of the Barents Sea, which has been the source of dispute between the two countries for the past 40 years.

It is said that there is a lot of oil in the sea bed around that area, and plenty of fish. And besides, Russia is a neighbor, a big neighbor in a permanent state of getting up off its knees. It's best not to quarrel with a neighbor like that. Giving Chechens asylum means recognizing that it is dangerous for them to live there, that they can be subjected to torture or even killed. This does not conform very well with the assurances of the Russian authorities that the situation in Chechnya is calm, serene and completely safe.



Building of the Immigration Directorate in Oslo.

Norway does not want to receive refugees. And in this case this reluctance has taken on the form of a concrete decision. And since reality, both Caucasian and Russian, is cruel, it is hard to prove that this decision is humane. There aren't that many legitimate arguments, that is why they are invented. Sometimes harshly, sometimes dumbly, and almost always with great cynicism towards people, many of whom have suffered horrible losses...

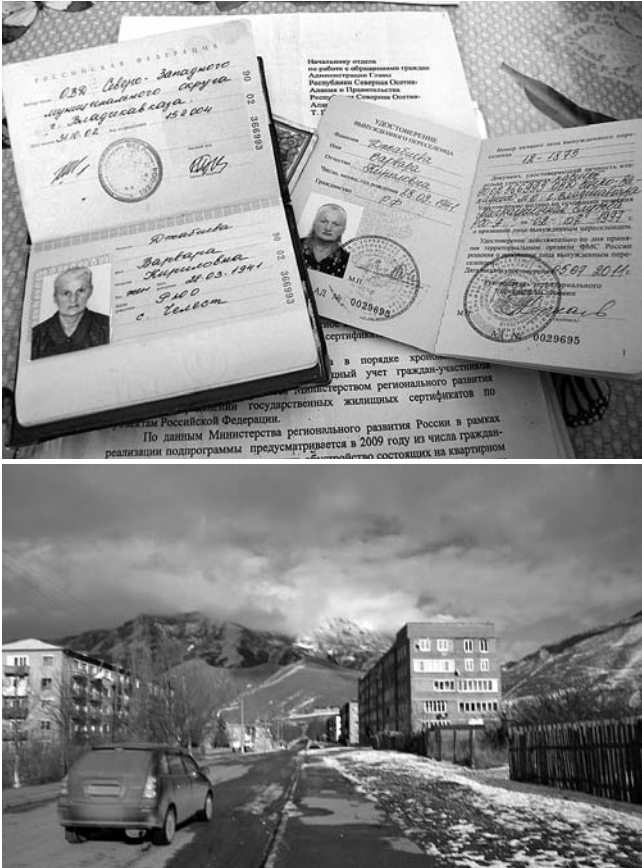
Furthermore, officials of the Norwegian migration service do not have a very clear and exhaustive understanding of the situation in the Northern Caucasus and the state structure of Russia, and clearly, the information that they do possess was not gathered through extensive reading of Human Rights Reports. It seems that at this point the migration services of Norway are simply inclined to deny refuge. When there isn't enough grounds for denial, they are hastily invented, otherwise they wouldn't be so ridiculous. To some extent the conclusion about the political motivation of such denials is supported by numbers. For example, in 2010 around 500 citizens of the Northern Caucasus, mostly from Chechnya, had applied, for various reasons, for a residence permit in Norway. However, less than five percent of them got a positive response!

The practice of considering the petitions in itself reeks of discrimination. All evidence provided by the petitioner, be it videos, photographs, mass media reports, indicating the first and last

names, as well as descriptions of the circumstances of the offences, committed against them personally or against their families, confirmative letters from Human Rights Organizations - none of this is taken into account. The principle of not trusting the words of the refugees nor the documents and evidence that they present seems to be crucial for the migration services of Norway. After an interview at the Directorate of Immigration practically all of the refugees from the Northern Caucasus receive a "negative" (rejection document - "DOSH") Given that the refugees refer to a lawyer for assistance only after the first rejection, the chances of their petition being granted are cut in half. After the second rejection it is unrealistic to hope for legal residence in the country. Is it better to start packing your things voluntarily, or to live in constant worry and fear that you will have to pack them in a strictly limited amount of time under the tight supervision of officers, dressed-up as if for a parade. I am afraid that the recent massive deportation was not the last.

Norway is fed up with refugees. It had offered assistance to many, not only from the Northern Caucasus, but also from various other corners of the world. The desire of the country to limit the influx of foreigners can be very well understood. However, it should be done based upon the realistic situation in the places where the people in distress are running away from. It would have been a lot more fair on the part of the Norwegian authorities to muster up the courage and make an official statement that their country no longer receives refugees. After that, not many Chechens would strive to go there. They wouldn't sell their houses for practically nothing, risk their health and sometimes even their lives. The influx would have been limited from the very beginning. And nobody would have to lie and rack their brains inventing legitimate excuses for rejection. Everything would have ended without even starting.

Akbmed GYSAEV, Oslo, Norway



At 50 this woman lost everything that she had managed to earn in her life

Georgy Dzhoev was born and raised in Georgia



Varvara Dzhabieva and Anatoly Sidakov

REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN HOME

Varvara Kirillovna Dzhabieva meets me at the entrance of her small home consisting of one and a half rooms, located in the suburbs of Vladikavkaz, in a dacha community.

This small house, which looks more like a shed, is all she has, Varvara Kirillovna is a pensioner. And a refugee. Her rough luck, just like the fate of thousands of her Soviet compatriots, who were unfortunate enough to meet the demise of the Soviet Union away from their ethnic homeland - is a great demonstration of how much our motherland values its people. Each person. All of us. At the age of 50 this woman lost everything, that she had earned during her life. She was granted refugee status in Russia. That's it. Nothing else. There are about five kilos of papers in the closet - correspondence with various state

officials. Requests to be provided with housing, formal replies, attempts to get income support and worthless pieces of paper in return.

In Ossetia one apartment is allocated for refugees each year. And there are several thousands of them standing in line. It turns out, that the possibility of living three thousand years is more probable than the chance for a refugee to receive housing in a reasonable period of time.

Varvara Kirillovna, a native Ossetian from Vladikavkaz, left her homeland with her family for Tajikistan in 1967. The provincial town of Dushanbe was turning into a modern capital before

her very eyes. She found herself a job at the local airport: "I worked there for 24 years, as a waitress in the Restaurant, as the responsible for maintaining order in the waiting area. I had earned enough money to buy myself an apartment in the center of Dushanbe. This city was mostly built by Russian-speaking people," she remembers. Varvara Kirillovna clarifies, that after the Revolution of 1917 many Ossetian natives went to Tajikistan. They built entire cities from the ground. There were a lot of Germans there.

- We were proud of the fact that our favorite singer, Anna German was born

in a Tajik kishlak - she remembers fondly. And laughs - In this airport I got acquainted with the secrets of the KGB. They chose us, Ossetian women, intentionally, when they had to receive important guests. They said that Russian women wouldn't do - they swear at everyone, Tatar girls talk a lot, while the German ones always end up accompanying the guest to his room. It's curious that the secret service officers often brought their own dishes. Once I was given a set and told that the Japanese guests should be served on these dishes. I was also told not to remove the plate with bread under any circumstances. At once I understood that they had a bug there.

In the mid-1990s Varvara, as many other people who had become foreigners, were called to their embassies and it was demanded that they return home. She was forced to sell her apartment for practically nothing - two hundred rubles. Varvara's neighbor earned three coats for his three-room furnished apartment.

- In Ossetia I was given the status of a forced migrant. They did not even cover my travel costs. Although, staying in Dushanbe was also no longer an option. Many Tajiks have left as well. My husband died and I was left alone. I

went to all the instances, paid the notary officer 1000 to 1500 rubles for every paper that he composed. And the pension of 6000 rubles is not of much assistance.

- I quit trying to achieve something, to obtain something - she says. - My friends told me to go to court. Maybe I will, a bit later, once I have the strength.

The seller of petty wares at the Vladikavkaz market, Dzhoev Georgiy was born in Georgia. He studied in a military academy and went to do military service there as well. In 1990 his family, composed of four people, was forced to leave by certain circumstances.

- We had to sell our apartment for five-hundred rubles. The neighbors turned their backs on us. As soon as the interethnic conflict started at the political level, the attitude of our neighbors and friends towards us changed greatly. We were told that our home is in Ossetia. Many families fell apart back then. For example the husband, an Ossetian, would leave the country and abandon his Georgian wife. Of course, under the pressure of the circumstances.

The refugees in Vladikavkaz are easy to spot. They mostly work at the market or carry out other unpopular tasks. The Russian government hasn't allocated a dime to help Georgiy and his kids, who

were school students back then. They were allowed to come back and live. That's it. The last Georgian-Russian war left a heavy scar. Former fellow-citizens became prisoners of the neighboring country, which turned into an enemy state from time to time.

The Ossetian Human Rights Activist Anatoly Sidakov, who is in charge of dealing with issues related to the return of Russian prisoners from Georgia in exchange for Georgians, captured as prisoners or caught during an illegal border crossing with Russia. He says that the process of exchange and negotiations is very rough. Up until now, he has been able to free only three people.

The social activists of Ossetia have recently appealed to Saakashvili with a request to pardon Kazbek Dzugkoev, who had worked as a truck driver for a private company; he got lost in the district of near-border villages and was captured by the Georgian border control.

In accordance with the Georgian legislation, he, the father of three young children, was sentenced to three years in prison. The prisoner suffers from local anemia, his relatives fear for his life. Dzugkoev pled guilty and is asking to be pardoned.

Unfortunately, there has been response from Saakashvili thus far.

HE WAS A DREAMER

In commemoration of the 100 Anniversary of the founder of Carachaevo-Balkar linguistics, Umar Aliev

On January 31 (18th according to the old style) 1911 in the Ozhaevsky village (now Upper Teberda), in the family courtyard of Ozhai Baicharov his son Aliev Umar was born. Bablash was the son of the wife of Ozhai, Totai Khubieva, widow of Magomed Aliev, who Ozhai had brought up as his own son. After the birth of Umar, Bablash and his family returned to the Teberda. I verified the date and place of birth of the first Doctor Litterarum of the Carachaev and Balkar people, the professor, who in reality was the founder of national linguistics U.B. Aliev, in order to avoid confusion in the story of his life. His life is typical for a Karachay of that time, and at the same time exclusive due to the countless hardships and challenges that he had to overcome.

This year commemorates the 100 anniversary of his birth. Forty years ago U.B. Aliev died in the city of Karachaevesk. He was buried in the same place that he was born - in Upper Teberda.

Bablash was 57 years old, when Umar was born. After him his mother Khabii Botasheva - Alieva gave birth to four more sons and a daughter. At the age of 11 Umar lost his mother, and became the senior in the family. The girl and two of the younger boys died. The year their mother died the Soviet government nationalized all of the property of Bablash Aliev, the old man and his sons were declared to be nonvoters (lishentsi), which meant that given their social background, they had no chances of getting an education.

However, Umar graduated with honors from the school of Teberda at the age of thirteen. A native of Teberda,



Chairman of the Revision Commission Ismail Baikulov, granted the boy-non-voter the right to study at the Batalpashinsky pedagogical college. In 1924 the 13-year-old Umar gathered all of the required documents, put some fresh grass in the chobura and starting walking to the village Batalpashinskaya (now the city of Cherkessk). He walked, changing the grass in the chobura from time to time, until he fell unconscious near one of the villages. As he himself remembers, he was picked-up by a Cossak with a red mustache, whose wife had fed and took care of the teenager, and gave him money for food. He continued his walk and made it. He registered for the school, settled in at the boarding school. He found new friends there. His first picture was taken with his classmate Glooviy. On the back he wrote in bad Russian: "to my dear sister Zurumkhan for long memory"

Thus began the difficult odyssey. Alone, without any help, financial or moral support, the boy from the Teberdinsky gorge was paving his way into science. When he came to Rostov-on-Don, the capital of the Northern

Caucasus, he found a job at the Rostselmash factory as the assistant locksmith, he was admitted to the workers faculty, passed the exams in the Industrial-pedagogical University. He lived in a barrack, in a residence, in rented apartments. He earned money for food, clothing, and books by working as a loader at the airport and pier. He mastered the Russian and German languages. He wrote first his educational and then professional presentations in Russian, poetry - in the Karacheav language. For great results he was admitted to the post-graduate studies program. He met and fell in love with a Russian girl and married her. In 1934 he received a referral, as a teacher, to the Gorsky Pedagogical Institute - the educational facility, assigned to the Kabardino-Balkar autonomous District. Before 1940 the Institute had been located in Pyatigorsk.

Their linguistics faculty had just been created, and was opening its own Chairs, study programs, introducing new disciplines. For the first time in the history of the region the people started studying their own language. The young scientist became the head of the Chair of the Karachevo-Balkar language, folklore and literature. Everything was started from zero - from definitions about what and how to teach, from writing programs and first textbooks for schools, Universities, with the parallel evolution of the written language, choice of script ... No one could advise or suggest anything. Then the first poets and writers appeared. U. Aliev had been writing poems since he was a child, and now suddenly, at the age of 23 he was expected to form the



Umar Aliev with his daughter Sveta, 1939

literary criticism, the science about the young literature - literary studies, organize the taping of his native folklore, both Balkar and Karachev, and shape the national science of folklore....

It is worth noting, that U. Aliev received his education under the supervision of academicians of the old classical Russian and partially European schools. He had already started working and teaching, when the new communist ideology, which transferred not only the format of practical training and education, but also the minds of the people, began to be integrated in the country. This ideology was meant to achieve the state objective of creating a completely new form of society and to raise a new breed of the human being. National traditions, convictions were denied, history was rewritten, literature and culture in all its forms were thrown overboard. At the same time began the "cleanup" within society itself. A battle was waged with the citizens of our country - enemies of the nation.

In 1936 U. Aliev got very ill - tuberculosis, a very tragic diagnosis in those times. However, it was this diagnosis that saved him from being arrested. His father died in 1938. His younger brothers Aliy and Hasan came to live with Umar. In 1939 an unexpected death had taken away the handsome, energetic young Aliy. The loss of loved ones, serious illness, unemployment and never-

ending creative work - that is what marked Umar's prewar years. Unable to work at the Institute, he wrote a research paper on the dialects of the Karachaev and Balkar people, which he presented to a student of the first graduating class - Balkar native Asket Appaev. He himself organized its defense for a PhD title - he did not care that his student would outrun him, he was just happy that this branch of science was developing. From the very first steps of his service to his own culture, he hid in the shadow, pushing forward his students and demonstrating their talent.

He saw his brother Hasan off to the front and the young man never returned, he went gone missing. Then came the evacuation. The Commissar of the staff of the Gorsky (Kabardino - Balkar) Pedagogical Institute, evacuated from Nalchik using the military Ossetian road, U. Aliev, with his wife and two small children, managed to reach Georgia, from there - to Azerbaijan, to Turkmenia by sea, and finally to the Republics of Central Asia. When working as a Russian teacher in the school of an Uzbek kishlak, he received an invitation to defend a thesis paper at the Institute of Asian Studies AS USSR, which had been evacuated to Tashkent. After the successful defense of his thesis he was appointed as the Head of Chair of General Linguistics at the Central Asian State University in Samarkand. In



With daughter Svetlana and son Ruslan, Pyatigorsk, 1958

January 1944 he received an urgent invitation to Nalchik to the post of the People's Commissar on Education of Kabardino-Balkaria. In March 1944 together with his people he became the victim of repressive deportation into Kyrgyzstan.

At that moment Umar Aliev was 33 years old.

In the capital of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic there were no scientists of the same caliber as U. Aliev. He started working, recruiting special migrants in the Institute. In 1948 he was excluded from the staff of the Institute, in accordance with the decree that the representatives of repressed nationalities could not be allowed to work in the teaching or administrative spheres. They were left only the option of physical labor. Their native languages were banned. The peoples themselves are extracted from the list of the peoples of the Soviet Union. The Big Soviet Encyclopedia has an article on the bedbug, however is missing a whole nation - "the Karachaev people". The 37-year-old U. Aliev, banned from the Institute, started writing the first book in the history of Turcology dedicated to the scientific grammar of the Karachev - Balkar language. We still have today the text of his well-planned thorough systematic plan: 1948-49 - Phonetics, 1950-52 - Morphology, 1953-55 - Syntaxes. The theory of Karachaevo-

Balkar linguistics in the context of general linguistics: U. Aliev introduces into world Turcology the language of two small peoples, which had been excluded from the list of Soviet peoples. In 1958, upon coming back home, to the Caucasus he defends a Doctor's thesis on the "Questions of Syntaxes of the Karachaevo-Balkar language."



U.B. Aliev, Karachaevsk, 1972

In 1962 the Dean of the Historical and Linguistic Faculty of the Kabardino-Balkar State University, the first Doctor Litterarum in the Republic, professor-turcologist U. Aliev is invited to Moscow to the post of Deputy Director of the Academic Institution. He is provided with an apartment. But then, suddenly the authorities of the Karachaevo-Cherkess autonomous district understand (for the first time!) that he is needed in his home Republic as well: he is asked to head the local pedagogical institute. And, forgetting about personal interests and rejecting serious career prospects (he would have become a professor in 3 to 4 years - he is a Karachaev national!) - U. Aliev abandons everything and rushes to Karachaevo-Cherkessia with a dream to create an academic, cultural center on his native land. A healthy, handsome young man, a famous scientist, a recognized authority in science, at the age of 51 he settles down in a residence in the administra-

tive center of the city of Karachaevsk and completely devotes himself to the construction of the Institute. Using his authority in Moscow, he gathers well-qualified specialists to be on his teaching staff and successfully demands more rooms for the Institution.

Overwhelmed by his project, he does not notice at once that it does not go in line with the plans of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. They start mentoring him, controlling him, a "spy" is assigned to him, who sends denunciation reports on the activities of Aliev, his behavior and quotes. He starts receiving warnings one after the other, comments, orders. Then come the various verifying commissions. Finally he is removed from the post, and receives a severe reprimand which is reflected in his registration card. In five years after his arrival in the Republic he has turned from a healthy, strong person into a heavy, swollen old man. He is invited to go back to Nalchik, is continuously invited to come to Moscow, to Rostov-on-Don, Baku, Novosibirsk, but he cannot leave, until the People's Commissar revokes the party reprimand. He continues to lecture at the University, works with PhD students, participates as an opponent in the defense of Doctorates in Moscow and various other cities and is preparing for the publication of a monograph on the "Syntaxes of the Karachaevo-Balkar languages, the concluding part of "Scientific Grammar" in the main Publishing house of the country, "Nauka" (Science).

However, the People's Commissar prohibits to order or buy this book for the Republic. Aliev receives 10 issues as the author of the book with a letter from the editor-in-chief, which informs him that not a single issue of the book will reach Karachaevo-Cherkessia. He sits down at the table and starts writing poems. He writes poems about how difficult it has been for him to live far away from home, among people speaking different languages. Nevertheless, they

understood him, loved him, appreciated and respected him. Finally he has arrived to his beautiful homeland, where he can listen to his beloved language all day long, however, here, for some reason he is not understood He was not meant to finish that sentence. The poet felt ill, he wrote a comma and lay down, never to get up again.

...Umar Bablashevich Aliev is a famous person, a scientist whose knowledge and experience are recognized not only in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Cherkessia. He is honored and respected in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Moscow. In the Caucasus his name is legendary, and the memory of this beautiful, charming, talented and kind person lives on today. Those, who knew him personally, admired him with us, can tell us so much more than we know already. They testify to the fact, that apart from being noble, kind and selflessly eager to learn, U. Aliev possessed a very rare quality - vastness, he was a truly outstanding spirit. He yearned to bring the torch of culture and knowledge to his people, but definitely was not focused only on loving one people. He was open to the whole world and wanted to demonstrate the greatness of his people to everyone. For U. Aliev this dream represented a part of his very complex and deep understanding of happiness. Yes, of course, he was a dreamer. And probably came into this world before his time - when the inhumane, stupid party line and somebody's personal, greedy interests were all against him. He was driven to the grave at the age of 60 and the development of the linguistics of the Karachaevo - Balkar language have come to a halt, all landmarks have been lost.

The official anniversary accompanied by a Scientific conference, dedicated to the 100 Anniversary of U.B. Aliev is to take place in October 2011. By that time I hope that all of Aliev's scientific and poetic heritage, practically not known by his own people, will become open to the world.

LETTERS TO DOSH

Dear editorial staff
of the DOSH Journal.

As-Salamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi
wa Barakatuhu!

My name is Iman Medetkhanova. I am writing to you from Moscow. I am a muscovite in several generations, but I will touch upon that a bit later. First of all I would like to express my immense gratitude to all of the staff members of this amazing journal, which is so "alive", especially in comparison with all the other published mass media, for your sincere and honest work, for your incredibly humane articles, which make you think about life on such a deep level, that all of your problems start to seem petty and not even noteworthy.

"DOSH" really does make a person think not about something trivial and unimportant, but rather about what surrounds us every minute of every day - happiness and pain, people who might need our help, simple human support, and a kind word, which sometimes can change another person's life. It's the first time that I have read such an interesting journal. Of course, before I have read a great deal of other journals and magazines, but it was "DOSH" that made me cry and laugh at the same time. The articles of your journal are so "alive", touching and truthful! THANK YOU SO MUCH THAT YOU EXIST! And may Allah give you many years of life and creative ideas, and successful growth of your creation. I have only one favor to ask of you - PLEASE ALWAYS STAY SUCH A HUMANE JOURNAL! I read "DOSH" for the first time in the summer of 2008, and then managed to buy a few more issues.

Issue 4 (22) published in 2008 practically overturned my perception of life. The article "The War Generation" made me look at life from a completely different perspective. These are not just words, which people throw around with such ease and then forget just as easily. The fortunes of the young women and men that are described in that article have deeply touched me. I cried, reading about them, and couldn't stop for a while after the article was through. I am truly amazed at the PATIENCE of the people, who survived



a war, lost their arms, legs, eyes and yet keep doing sports, they get married and have kids! Many people really shut down when something horrible happens, and are left alone, one on one, with their own memories. But these guys and girls found the inner strength necessary to live a full life, just like everyone else.

I am not Chechen, I am Russian. I am twenty five years old. Eight years ago I converted to Islam, in another couple of years I got married and am now raising my four year old son Adam. My best friend lives in Grozny, and everything I know about the war I know from her, from my beloved Elina. Although many Russians and Chechens are prejudiced towards each other (the war waged by politicians played its role in this matter) Elina and I love each other like sisters. In every phone conversation that is what we call each other "Sa yisha" (my sister), and these words speak for themselves. Our relationship does not contain an ounce of insincerity, cynicism or mutual reproach. We are simply friends, and our friendship could serve as a good example for those chauvinists, who cannot see beyond the tip of their nose, who do not know life at all, and only repeat time and time again like parrots what they had just heard on the news: "All Chechens, Dagestanis and Ingushes are terrorists." I encounter such people on a regular basis. When they see a girl wearing a scarf on her head they start discussing her in pretty raw, harsh terms, a priori "issuing a verdict" to a simple Muslim girl.

Such cruelty is very irritating, but you can't really start explaining to every stranger, that their chauvinism is the result of irresponsible accusations made by the mass media and that the only remedy from this peculiar illness is to watch less television. This summer, Inshallah, my son and I are planning to pay a visit to Chechnya. Many of my acquaintances ask in horror "Are you mad? Are you tired of life?!", and I simply respond "No, on the contrary, I want to live even more!" I have been wanting to see Chechnya, to see Grozny with my own eyes for a while now, the city that once was the most beautiful city in the Caucasus Perhaps, if "DOSH" was read not only by Caucasians, but also people of other nationalities, I would like to address them with the following words: The Almighty has created us all equal, and all of us have to, we simply must live in peace, especially in such a huge multinational state as Russia, where century after century, Muslims and Hebrews and Christians and hundreds of nationalities have been living side by side. Why fight then? Why hate those who maybe aren't as careful in their prayers, or see life differently?"

The "DOSH" journal must be sold not only in kiosks by the mosques, but rather in all kiosks, along with all of the printed press. That is my opinion, however, I am sure that many "DOSH" readers will support me.

Once again, I would like to THANK you for what you are doing in our day.

Sincerely,

Your regular reader Iman
Medetkhanova, Moscow

The Smoke of Xenophobia Covered Moscow

