

Zyazikov Reportedly Beaten Up by Opposition Businessman

The opposition Ingushetiya.ru website reported on April 30 that around two weeks earlier, Musa Keligov, the former deputy presidential envoy to the Southern Federal District and well-known businessman who some call the “purse” of the opposition to Murat Zyazikov, Ingushetia’s president (Chechnya Weekly, March 20), by chance ran into Zyazikov in a Moscow hotel. According to Ingushetiya.ru, the chance encounter ended with Zyazikov’s bodyguards finding him “unconscious and with a smashed face.” The website reported that Keligov asked Zyazikov bodyguards to tell Zyazikov once he regained consciousness that he had been dealt with “according to Ingush laws” and that judgment according to Russian laws lay ahead.



According to Ingushetiya.ru, Keligov beat up Zyazikov because the Ingush president had ordered the republic’s acting prosecutor, Gelani Merzhuev, to ask a court to designate an interview that Keligov gave to the newspaper Vremya Novostei and was published on February 11 as “extremist.” In that interview, Merzhuev not only criticized Zyazikov and said that opposition protests in Ingushetia were the result of Zyazikov’s own failings, but also said that Zyazikov’s predecessor, Ruslan Aushev, would handle the situation better and still enjoyed the support of at least 80 percent of Ingushetia’s population.

Ingushetiya.ru reported that Merzhuev, on Zyazikov’s orders, asked an Ingush court to designate the interview as “extremist” despite the fact that legally, he could ask a court for a ruling only after a formal investigation of the article’s contents was carried out and after Zyazikov filed suit on the basis that the article contained falsehoods that impugned his honor and dignity. Despite the fact that these conditions were not met, Merzhuev asked a Nazran court to rule on whether or not Keligov’s interview was extremist, and the court ruled on April 3 that the interview was indeed extremist in nature.

Itar-Tass on May 1 quoted Zyazikov’s press secretary, Bers Yevloev, as saying that the report of a fight between the Ingushetian president and a “certain Ingush businessman” in a Moscow hotel was simply another attempt to “destabilize the situation in the republic [and] disrupt the atmosphere of inter-ethnic peace and accord” in Ingushetia. The claims made about the incident are “provocations and slanderous statements,” Yevloev said.

Meanwhile, Newsru.com reported on May 1 that the opposition in Ingushetia has begun collecting signatures on a petition calling for Ruslan Aushev to return as the republic’s president. “The form of the signature lists has already been worked out [and] those responsible for gathering signatures in a majority of Ingushetia’s inhabited localities have already been determined,” the website quoted Magomed Khazbiev, the head of organizing committee for “the national Ingush protest rally,” as saying.

Khazbiev, who has been among the organizers of other anti-Zyazikov protests in Ingushetia, said the petition calling on Ruslan Aushev to return as the republic’s president is connected to the fact that the socio-political and economic situation in the republic has spun out of the federal authorities’ control and is becoming increasingly threatening. He said statements made by officials claiming that the situation in Ingushetia is under control do not correspond to reality. According to Khazbiev, the citizens of Ingushetia, along with representatives of religious and public organizations in the republic, are expressing deep concern about the republic’s unstable situation, violations of human rights and growing economic problems. He said that inter-ethnic tension in Ingushetia is increasing and that its population has ceased feeling like it is part of Russia since it does not see federal authorities paying attention to its problems. Evidence of this is the news that has been coming out of the republic recently, Khazbiev said.

In that regard, the news coming out of Ingushetia during the last week was replete with reports of attacks that have become the norm in the republic over the last year or so. Interfax reported on May 1 that a serviceman with the federal Interior Ministry’s Internal Troops was wounded in an attack on a police post on the Kavkaz federal highway in Ingushetia’s Nazran district. A law-enforcement source said it was possible that the serviceman was shot by a sniper.

Kavkazky Uzel reported April 30 that a policeman in the city of Malgobek escaped injury when he found and defused a radio-controlled improvised explosive device underneath his car. A similar incident took place in Malgobek on April 27 when a homemade explosive device was found underneath a car belonging to an officer of the Ingush branch of

the Federal Security Service (FSB).

Newsru.com reported on April 29 that a homemade explosive device employing an anti-tank bazooka round was detonated at a bus stop near the central district hospital in Nazran. No one was hurt in the incident. Two other improvised explosive devices were discovered and defused in Nazran later that same day.

On April 25, unidentified gunmen fired on a car belonging to a deputy in Ingushetia's People's Assembly, Ruslan Gagiev. The legislator's brother, Islam Gagiev, who was behind the wheel at the time of the attack, was hit by gunfire and died of his wounds in the hospital several hours later. RIA Novosti quoted a law-enforcement source in Ingushetia as saying two other people were wounded in the shooting, but they were not identified. The source said that 30 minutes after the attack on Gagiev's car, unidentified gunmen reportedly driving in a Zhiguli automobile fired on a traffic police post located near the Matritsa movie theater in Nazran, wounding one policeman. Ten minutes after that second attack, gunmen fired on a police post located on Kommunalnaya Street in Nazran, wounding another policeman.

Kavkazky Uzel reported on April 24 that two servicemen were wounded when militants detonated a radio-controlled explosive device as a column of military vehicles was passing by. Ingushetiya.ru reported that the blast also damaged an armored personnel carrier. There was no information about exactly where the incident took place.

Kavkazky Uzel reported on April 23 that unidentified attackers in the village of Surkhakhi, which is located in Ingushetia's Nazran district, fired on a car carrying FSB officers. Citing RIA Novosti, the website reported that two FSB officers were wounded in the attack and taken to the hospital, where they were listed in grave condition (Chechnya Weekly, April 24). However, Ingushetiya.ru, citing a Nazran district police source, reported on April 23 that three FSB officers had been killed and one seriously wounded in an attack that took place next to a new rural mosque. The opposition website reported that everyone, even officers from Ingushetia's Interior Ministry, were being kept away from the site of the attack by FSB units that blocked the main road leading from Nazran to Surkhakhi following the attack. Ingushetiya.ru reported that armored personnel carriers and other armored vehicles had been deployed inside Surkhakhi itself.

Following up on an incident on April 21 in which unidentified gunmen reportedly fired on a police checkpoint on the Kavkaz federal highway in Nazran's Nasyr-Kortovsky municipal district, (Chechnya Weekly, April 24), Kavkazky Uzel reported that while, according to initial reports, policemen and Interior Troops servicemen had returned fire, local residents later claimed that the checkpoint was not fired on at all and that the law-enforcement personnel at the checkpoint had aimed intense fire from grenade launchers and large-caliber machineguns at nearby homes. According to Kavkazky Uzel, Khidrieva Maret, a resident of the village of Ekhazhevo, was wounded in the security forces' barrage.

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Mass Brawl and Hunger Strike Reported at Notorious Chechen Prison

Kavkazky Uzel reported on April 25 that inmates of the notorious Chechen correctional colony No. 2 in Chernokozovo had announced a hunger strike following a mass fight between inmates. While the Chechen department of the Federal Service for the Execution of Punishments (FSIN) denied that prisoners were on a hunger strike, Kavkazky Uzel quoted the relative of a Chernokozovo inmate as saying the strike had begun on the morning of April 24. "I was at a meeting with my brother, and he told me that the whole zone was on a hunger strike," the source told the website. "The fact is that following the fight which took place two days ago, their cells were searched and all their personnel belongings taken away. I think it is scandalous that everyone should suffer as a result of the actions of a small group!"



According to the source, the brawl between prisoners took place on April 22 and left 11 people injured. The source said that around 100 people were involved in the fight. "It was not simply a fight; knives, forks and iron rods were used [and] 11 people were taken to the hospital with broken arms [and] legs, internal hemorrhages; someone's kidney was punctured with a spoke." The source said that the fight was caused by a dispute involving an inmate who previously worked as a law-enforcement officer. "A former ORB-2 employee was sent to the colony to serve his sentence, and our guys thought that he needed to be punished," the source said. "The disturbance began because of that. Those who used to work for the police and are now in prison took his side. A fight broke out." Employees of ORB-2, which is the federal Interior Ministry's Second Operational Investigative Bureau, have been accused of widely employing torture at detention facilities in Chechnya.

Newsru.com reported on April 24 that the entire population of Chernokozovo facility had joined the hunger strike and that the inmates refused to eat that morning and planned to continue refusing food.

The head of the FSIN's Chechen directorate, General Ali Iriskhanov, denied reports that a hunger strike was taking place and said the prison colony was operating in a normal mode. Iriskhanov admitted that a fight had taken place, but gave a different version for why it started. According to the general, a fight took place between the inmates' relatives. "A conflict arose over watching a television program," Newsru.com on April 25 quoted him as saying. "One wanted to watch one program, another [wanted to watch] another one. After beating each other, they were taken to the hospital for examination. One of them remains in the hospital." He said that the fight's instigators would spend five to ten days in a punishment cell in order to ensure that the fight did not flare up again. "In the morning, some convicts stated that they were announcing a hunger strike and wouldn't take food if the punishment of the [fight's] instigators wasn't reversed, but at lunch all to a man came out to stand in formation and took food. These are not political prisoners; most of them were convicted on narcotics charges and a demarche along the lines of a hunger strike is inappropriate. At the moment, there are no problems whatsoever in the colony; the organizers of the fight have apologized to one another, shaken hands, and we expect no consequences from this fight."

Meanwhile, Newsru.com on April 26 quoted Chechnya's human rights ombudsman, Nurdy Nukhazhiev, as saying that the rights of prisoners are observed more conscientiously in Chechnya than in other Russian regions. Nukhazhiev said in a statement that Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov "has visited the colony in Chernokozovo on more than one occasion," after which the inmates were given "a modern gymnasium" and "musical instruments" and the impoverished families of prisoners were given assistance. Nukhazhiev said the media had greatly exaggerated the dimensions of the fight that took place in the prison colony, insisting that only eight people were involved, that no one was seriously injured and that no prisoners refused to take food in protest. According to Nukhazhiev, three instigators of the fight were put in a punishment cell and one who received moderate injuries in the fight remained in the prison's medical unit.

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Badrudin Yamadaev Placed on Federal Wanted List

Badrudin Yamadaev, who is the younger brother of Vostok battalion commander Sulim Yamadaev and viewed by many observers as the unit's de facto commander, has been put on the federal wanted list for kidnapping. Kommersant reported on April 29 that investigators believe that more than a year ago, Badrudin Yamadaev kidnapped the brothers of Abubakar Arsamakov, owner of the Samson-K meat-processing plant in St. Petersburg and president of Moscow Industrial Bank (MIB). The brothers, who have not been seen since, are believed to have been murdered.



On April 23, the investigative unit of the Investigative Committee for the Chechen Republic revived the investigation into the kidnapping of 56-year-old Yunus Arsamakov and 59-year-old Yusup Arsamakov that had been launched in February 2007 and closed down five months later. Kommersant noted that Sulim Yamadaev was initially suspected in the kidnapping, given that he had actively taken sides with opponents of Abubakar Arsamakov in a dispute over the ownership of Samson-K. Yet suspicions that the Yamadaevs were involved in the kidnappings dissipated after Sulim Yamadaev personally went to the Arsamakovs' relatives in Chechnya, telling them he was not involved in the kidnappings and promised to do everything possible to find the perpetrators.

After the April 14 armed confrontation between members of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov's security detail and Vostok battalion personnel in Gudermes, Kadyrov denounced the Yamadaev brothers as kidnappers and the case involving the kidnapping of the Arsamakovs was revived. Badrudin Yamadaev was then put on the federal wanted list in connection with the case. The Chechen authorities note that Badrudin was convicted of attempted murder in 2003 but subsequently freed from prison under circumstances that remain murky. Kommersant quoted Badrudin Yamadaev's other older brother, former State Duma Deputy Ruslan Yamadaev, as saying: "I myself would like to see Badik [Badrudin]. And as long as he is absent, they can hang all the crimes committed in Chechnya on him."

Kadyrov, for his part, was quoted by the Grani.ru website on April 26 as saying: "The law-enforcement organs of the Chechen Republic have repeatedly handed over material to the military prosecutor's office devoted to the crimes committed by Vostok servicemen ... however the proper investigations were not carried out; [they were] delayed for unknown reasons and shelved. The investigators have gathered material on crimes that were committed, and I will see to it that the perpetrators are punished." Kadyrov accused the Yamadaev brothers of involvement in kidnappings and murders, and specifically mentioned the disappearances and murders of residents of the village of Borozdinovskaya and the abduction and presumed murder of the Arsamakov brothers (Chechnya Weekly, April 17 and 24).

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Briefs

- Kadyrov Recommended for Russia's Highest Civilian Award

Chechnya's parliament on April 25 called on the Russian government to confer Russia's highest civilian award, the "For Services to the Fatherland" First Degree, on the republic's president, Ramzan Kadyrov, Interfax reported. "Since the moment Kadyrov assumed of post of chairman of the government, and then ... the powers of the president, global positive changes have taken place," the chairman of the Chechen People's Assembly, Dukvakha Abdurakhmanov, told the news agency. "Grozny and other population centers have risen from the ruins. Today, Grozny has turned into one of the most beautiful cities. Schools and hospitals are being built, rebuilt and repaired; roads, gas pipelines and electric power lines are being laid. Peace and stability reign in the republic. And in these conditions we think that Kadyrov has earned this award." Kadyrov has already been made an honorary member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences; received the title "Distinguished Builder of the Chechen Republic"; received the "Hero of the Russian Federation" award from President Vladimir Putin for "courage and heroism shown in the discharge of duties"; received Chechnya's highest award, the Order of Akhmad Kadyrov, for "support of legality, law and order and public security in the Chechen Republic"; and earned a doctorate after defending his dissertation on the "Optimal Management of Contractual Relationships in the Construction Industry" (Chechnya Weekly, March 6).

- Russian Commander Discusses Special Mountain Brigades

In an interview published in the newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda on April 29, the commander of the North Caucasus Military District, General Aleksandr Baranov, discussed the two special mountain brigades whose creation was first announced by President Vladimir Putin in August 2004. "These brigades were formed, according to a decree of the president of the Russian Federation, on the territory of the Republic of Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Republic of Dagestan," Baranov told the newspaper, adding that they have been fully brought up to strength in terms of personnel, arms and military technology. "I would note that these motorized rifle brigades are intended for operations precisely in the highlands. Correspondingly, a system of combat training has been constructed. Regular exercises with the brigades' personnel are carried out at the Daryal mountain training ground ... I can say that the [North Caucasus Military] district has ... full-fledged battle-ready formations that are capable of fulfilling and have already fulfilled military tasks. The brigades have also been given anti-terrorist functions. I believe that these formations are playing not a minor role in supporting stability on the territory of the North Caucasus."

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Rebel Restructuring Revitalizes Insurgency

By [Mairbek Vatchagaev](#)

It has been almost a month since this author first wrote about the Alkhazurovo raid for Chechnya Weekly (Chechnya Weekly, April 3). By now, some preliminary conclusions may already be drawn, and it is worth noting that certain changes have occurred that cannot be ignored by those who consistently monitor developments in Chechnya.

It has become obvious, for example, that the actions staged by the rebels are becoming a permanent trend—that is, the resistance movement is trying to catch up for the loss of the last two years during which its leadership has been focused on political issues without giving the military aspect its due importance. The latter has even led some armchair analysts to rush to judgment and declare that the resistance movement had been defeated once and for all.

The loss of key leaders with the assassinations of Aslan Maskhadov, Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev and Shamil Basaev has certainly affected the resistance movement, but not in the way envisaged by the analysts of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the Ministry of Defense. That is, instead of causing the resistance movement to fade away naturally after its key leaders were eliminated, the assassinations triggered qualitative and structural changes within the movement that have complicated things for Moscow, which now has to deal with rebel fighters in virtually all of the republics of the North Caucasus rather than in Chechnya alone.

The recent changes, however, have also not been uniformly positive for the resistance movement, and this is particularly true with regard to the declaration of the Caucasus Emirate and the underlying replacement of the principles of independence with a radical Islamic platform. This was a negative development for Chechnya's political leadership that has cost it much time and caused a rift in the resistance movement between a faction that identifies with Islamic ideology and a faction that supports democratic ideas and retains the goal of independence.

Today the longtime close friends, Dokka Umarov and Akhmed Zakaev, find themselves at the opposing ends of a debate over the ideological core of the resistance movement. What should form the foundation of the resistance movement's philosophy? These are the disagreements that landed the onetime friends in the middle of online debates hosted on Chechen websites (Chechenews.com for Akhmed Zakaev, Kavkazanahmash.com for Dokka Umarov, and the many other Web resources that each of them control) that occasionally eclipse the identity of their common enemy—that is, the Russian army in Chechnya.

In the meantime, it remains as true as ever that Umarov and Zakaev need each other. As a politician with no on-the-ground military support from rebel fighters in Chechnya, Akhmed Zakaev is unable to attract much interest or support. Dokka Umarov is similarly handicapped by not having a political wing, although he has been trying to build his own political network by appointing representatives. In truth, however, few people would be willing to deal with Umarov's men because of their affiliation with Salafism, the radical strain of Islam.

Qualitative changes within the resistance movement should also be noted. Prior to 2007, the most active resistance units were based in the eastern part of Chechnya. Yet the attacks they suffered last year, in which commanders of these units were killed one after another, took a toll on their capabilities. Today, the center of activity is shifting toward the units stationed in the western part of Chechnya. The name of Tarkhan Gaziev, the western sector commander, is gaining more and more recognition, although lately he became better known for his appointment by Dokka Umarov as the head of the mukhabarrat (a sort of intelligence service). The Alkhazurovo raid, the subsequent rebel operation in Yandi-Kotar village (Caucasus Times, April 7; Chechnya Weekly, April 10) and a reported mass invasion by rebel fighters (which was reported only by the Kavkaz-Center website on April 20, and may be partially true even if the real fighter headcount was ten times lower than the reported 400) all indicate that the long-awaited restructuring by Dokka Umarov is already in progress.

Out of all the attacks reported online by the rebel websites, the only ones that have been confirmed was the arson attack on the administration building in the village of Bamut (Regnum.ru, April 21) and perhaps the raids on other settlements, which have revived the tactic originally used by the rebels under Aslan Maskhadov's leadership but was abandoned for fear of putting the village residents at risk. Nevertheless, the levels of activity in the western part of

Chechnya are slowly rising after a long lull—a development eagerly awaited by Ingushetia and Dagestan, which have been bearing the brunt of actions by Russia's special services and Interior Ministry for a long time now.

Against the backdrop of an increase in actions by the resistance, the scandal that put a question mark over the stability of Ramzan Kadyrov's rule could become a cold shower, of sorts, for both Russia and the many Western analysts who have prematurely declared the death of the resistance movement.

The conflict between Kadyrov and Sulim Yamadaev, commander of the GRU's Vostok battalion, served as proof that installing pro-Moscow appointees by force is a dead-end strategy. Colossal sums of money have been invested into these handpicked appointees to make them into cooperative politicians. The clash, however, exposed the weaknesses of Moscow's policy and its inability to maintain control over the relationship between the two clans. Because of their criminal past, these two groups must demonstrate their loyalty to Moscow on a daily basis, and the fact that Moscow continues to use individuals with a questionable history shows its failings in Chechnya. That is, Moscow has no hopes of finding intelligent or even competent public servants, and therefore has to make do with former criminals like Kadyrov, Yamadaev, Gantamirov, Kakiev et al.

The seeds of the recent disagreement, which resulted in casualties and hostages captured on both sides, were sown during the first Chechen campaign after the first confrontation between Kadyrov and Yamadaev. Incidentally, it would be a mistake to believe that Sulim Yamadaev is the one calling the shots—he has lived in Moscow since 1992 (except for a break between 1995 and 2000) and his family and business interests are based in Moscow. Sulim Yamadaev visits Chechnya only occasionally, which is why his brother Badruddin Yamadaev is the real commander of his people in Chechnya, meaning the members of the Vostok battalion (and before Badruddin, Vostok's de facto commander was another Yamadaev brother—Dzhabrail, who was assassinated at his base in Dyshni-Vedeno in 2003). Their older brother Khalid also settled in Moscow after winning a seat in the Russian parliament.

This was not Kadyrov's first run-in with the Yamadaev brothers. This time, the murder of two members of the Vostok battalion, which is under the GRU (it's not quite clear why a unit specializing in Russia's foreign operations has been deployed in Chechnya), made Badruddin Yamadaev look for an excuse to take revenge for the death of his people. Kadyrov certainly knew that retaliation would follow, but it appears that his closest associates have prepared for exactly that type of response. Everyone close to Kadyrov hastily made televised statements blaming the Yamadaev brothers for all and sundry. The local television coverage made one believe that everything has been planned ahead of time. Notably, the local TV channels tried to present the matter as an event of international magnitude and everyone without exception expressed support for the beloved and esteemed leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

Comparisons with Movladi Baisarov's case are not quite warranted; that conflict was between the FSB and Ramzan Kadyrov and it was not surprising that FSB gave Baisarov up so quickly, given that Vladimir Putin backed Kadyrov and hardly anyone would stand up against Putin's support. The current skirmish is between Kadyrov and the GRU, and the GRU might not give their people up as easily as the FSB (Novayagazeta.ru, November 20, 2006). Besides, giving up the only family in Russia with three members (Sulim, Khalid and Dzhabrail) who have received the Hero of Russia award would be tantamount to admitting errors in policy towards that family and consequently entail a revision of government policy toward the Yamadaev family in general.

This conflict will not be without consequences for public opinion in Chechnya. For the people who came to believe that Ramzan Kadyrov has no serious opposition (as evidenced by the departure of notorious individuals like Bislan Gantamirov, Malik Saidullaev, Movladi Baisarov and others from the republic's political arena), the conflict will serve as proof that there is trouble brewing at home, and that conflicts of this sort may not be limited to the Yamadaev brothers. The real question is who will be next after the Yamadaevs?

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Chechen Rebels Survive Another Winter and Fight On

By Andrei Smirnov

Late in January, Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov declared that only 60-70 militants remained in Chechnya. Kadyrov had promised to eliminate all rebels before the arrival of spring. "This is their last winter, believe me," Ramzan said repeatedly (Interfax, January 23). Why the Chechen president made such a bold statement is unclear, but three months later, it is safe to say that it has seriously damaged Kadyrov's reputation—above all in the eyes of the Russian authorities.

Having analyzed the situation in Chechnya, the people in the Kremlin and federal security officials have come to a disappointing conclusion: the reconstruction of Chechnya has not affected support for the insurgency from the Chechen population and young Chechen men continue to join the rebel ranks.



On April 10, General Arkady Yedeleev, the commander of the anti-terrorist forces in the North Caucasus, said at a meeting in the Chechen capital Grozny that there were 500 rebel squads in the Caucasus and that their ranks were growing (Kavkazky Uzel, April 11).

Seeing that economic development is not reducing support for the rebels, officials found a new explanation for why the insurgency remains so popular: the influence of "radical Islam." At the same meeting in Grozny, Vladimir Kulishov, the head of the Chechen branch of the Federal Security Service (FSB), complained that "after decades of state atheism most believers have a vague idea of what Islam is." Kulishov said that the FSB was taking part in the work of a commission of the Chechen government to license religious schools in the republic (RIA Novosti, April 10).

Thus it would appear that officials are looking for explanations for why the Chechen insurgency remains alive. At the same time, they need a scapegoat, a political leader who can be held responsible for failures of the anti-insurgency campaign in the region. Ramzan Kadyrov and his government are the first choice for the role of the scapegoat. On March 28, Kavkazky Uzel reported that the Chechen branch of the federal Prosecutor General's Office blamed the republican financial control bodies under the Chechen president's authority for failing to punish those officials in the Chechen government who embezzle money from the state budget. On April 29, the federal Audit Chamber declared that it had found mistakes in the planning of the Chechen budget (Yuga, April 29).

It is clear that such critical statements concerning the financial policy of the Chechen authorities are aimed at Ramzan Kadyrov personally, given that Kadyrov is constantly boasting about how much he has done to make life in Chechnya better.

A new round of disagreements between Kadyrov and Moscow was provoked by an extremely unsuccessful winter campaign by the federal forces in the region. None of leaders of the Chechen rebels—such as Dokka Umarov, Tarkhan Gaziev, Aslanbek Vaduev, Usman Muntsiev, Khusein Gakaev and many others—was liquidated, detained or even hurt during the winter. Special forces managed to destroy only one rebel group—headed by Uvaise Techiev—during the two winter months. The destruction of Techiev's group was the only real success of the federal forces' winter campaign in Chechnya. Human rights activists point to the decrease in kidnappings in Chechnya, but they do not note that this could simply be the result of intelligence problems on the part of the police and the FSB. If you do not know who is involved in insurgent activities, you do not know whom to detain, and it is no secret that most of the kidnappings that occur in Chechnya are in fact arrests by security forces.

So, why did the rebels in Chechnya make it through the winter so successfully? The insurgents themselves explain this by their change in tactics: most of them now live permanently in their mountain bases and do not come into the villages. At a meeting with rebels that took place in Chechnya last year, Dokka Umarov, the top leader of the Caucasian insurgency, explained the need for this tactic. "As we know, the winter here (in Chechen mountain areas-AS) is harsh, but despite this a mujahid should spend the winter in the forest," he said. "Because in the forest, when you are armed, well-equipped ... you are able to defend your honor when you have weapons and equipment close at hand. When a mujahid comes home unarmed in order to warm up or to sleep, the enemies can attack him and try to capture or to kill him. So in order to prevent such things, we should stay here, in the forest, and spend the winter there too" (the video has been posted on YouTube, and can be seen at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=SxiULCtU4Dk>).

It is well known that neither the Russian nor the pro-Russian Chechen troops are as good at mountain warfare as the guerrillas, for whom the Chechen mountain area is real home. The clashes that took place this winter in the Chechen mountains (Kurchaloi, Nozhay-Yurt, and Vedeno districts) have proven this once again. Russian forces and Chechen policemen suffered serious casualties during these clashes, but their operations had no real results. By staying in the mountains, the rebels prevented the security forces from using their main method of fighting the insurgents—that is, to search, surround and kill militants one by one in settlements.

Meanwhile, with the arrival of spring, the rebels started using the tactics of the police and of other security forces against them. Rebel squads move from mountain bases in the forests into Chechen settlements, where they kidnap or kill policemen and the most active officials of Kadyrov's government. On April 17, three rebels kidnapped and killed Ali Gaytamurov, the head of the Sunzha district police department. Late at night on April 20, a rebel squad entered the village of Shalazhi and kidnapped two policemen and one official from the Chechen Ministry of Justice (Chechen Information Center press release, April 21). This April, militants attacked policemen and burned administrative buildings in several villages of the Urus-Martan, Achkhoy-Martan, Sunzha and Vedeno districts. Kadyrov loyalists are their main targets. Dokka Umarov and other rebel commanders understand that by weakening Kadyrov's power in Chechnya they damage the Kremlin's policy of Chechenization in the republic. Chechenization continues to be the main problem for the insurgency and the rebel leadership's top priority is to disrupt it. Dokka Umarov said that "there are 160,000 workers in Chechnya who went to work for kuffar (infidels-AS) for a salary. The Russians count on these people and use them to oppose us. What those people do is a great evil and they will be held accountable for that" (<http://youtube.com/watch?v=SxiULCtU4Dk>).

It is hard to predict how the situation in Chechnya will develop this summer. One can assume, however, that rebel attacks against Kadyrov's men will increase, because the more doubts the Kremlin has about Kadyrov's ability to control the region firmly, the better it will be for the Chechen insurgency.

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