

### Attempt on Ramzan Kadyrov's Life Reported

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov on July 30 denied reports that he had been the target of an assassination attempt. "Those rumors are being generated either by the Wahhabis themselves or provocateurs straining for cheap sensationalism," Gazeta.ru quoted Kadyrov as saying during a meeting with Chechnya's education and science minister, Anzor Muzaev. The Chechen president insisted that the situation in the republic is peaceful and stable. "Naturally, there is a circle of persons whom this [situation] doesn't suit," he said. "This sort of verbiage has only one goal—to destabilize the situation in the region. These provocative fantasies are engendered by ideologists of the extremists and their henchmen. Jackals who don't have the guts to go into the woods themselves." The Chechen president's press service also denied that there had been an attempt on Kadyrov's life, calling the reports "provocations aimed against the Chechen Republic and its president."



The first reports that an attempt had been made on Kadyrov's life appeared on July 28. The Regnum News Agency, citing a source in the Sever (North) battalion, a unit of the Chechen Interior Ministry's Internal Troops that among other things guards the Chechen president, reported that the assassination attempt had taken place in the town of Gudermes the day before Kadyrov's meeting with President Dmitry Medvedev at the presidential residence in Gorki outside Moscow on July 25. Regnum quoted its source as saying that an unidentified person had fired at Kadyrov with a Makarov pistol at a public event in Gudermes and that Kadyrov was saved thanks to unspecified technical equipment and the "adroitness" of the presidential security team, one of whose members shot the attacker in the head. Regnum's correspondent in Chechnya reported that all of the republic's "power structures," including the Sever and Zapad (West) battalions, had been put on heightened alert several days earlier and that security was increased in all public areas and in areas that Kadyrov was expected to visit. "There are rumors that the reinforcement [of security] is connected with an attack on Kadyrov," a Sever battalion member told Regnum's correspondent. "All individuals who arouse suspicion or who don't have [identification] documents are being [detained]. Such a round-up took place on Saturday [July 27] in the central market [of Grozny]."

Like Regnum, Kavkazky Uzel also reported on July 28 that an attempt had been made on Kadyrov's life. The website, however, said the attack had taken place in Khosi-Yurt (aka Tsentoroi), which is the Kadyrovs' native village, and that the village had been blockaded by security forces following the incident.

Kavkaz-Center, for its part, reported on July 28 that six people from Kadyrov's inner circle who were accused of plotting an attack on the Chechen leader had been captured in Tsentoroi and killed after being "sadistically tortured." The rebel website said that relatives of those killed were afraid to give information about what happened but that one of those murdered was a former classmate of Kadyrov and that all six belonged to the Benoi teip. According to Kavkaz-Center the bodies of two of those killed were burned and the remaining four bodies were dismembered.

Kavkazky Uzel reported on July 30 that there had indeed been an attempt on Kadyrov's life, but that it had happened not during the preceding several days but a week earlier. The website quoted an informed source in Chechnya's "power structures" that the Chechen president had been attacked by a close relative who had recently returned from Moscow, where he had been studying at a higher learning institution. The source said the incident had taken place in Tsentoroi and that the alleged perpetrator had fired on Kadyrov with an automatic rifle. Kadyrov's bodyguards managed to shield him and shoot the attacker, but several presidential bodyguards were wounded, the source said. "On July 28 the village really was essentially blockaded," the source added. "Not a single car was allowed

into or out of it. However, it is hard to say exactly what this was connected with.”

Kavkazky Uzel, however, reported that there are several different versions of what happened. According to one version of events, a recently-hired member of Kadyrov’s bodyguard detail tried to shoot him with a pistol, while according to another, a car in which Kadyrov was supposed to be riding was fired on, but the Chechen president’s cousin, not Kadyrov himself, was in the car when the attack took place.

As Kavkazky Uzel noted, three Chechens detained in Moscow in May 2007 on suspicion of preparing terrorist attacks using explosives discovered in a car near a metro station in the Russian capital (Chechnya Weekly, May 17, 2007) were reportedly planning to carry out bombings during May 9 Victory Day celebrations in the Russian capital and reportedly later told investigators that Kadyrov had been a potential target (Kavkazky Uzel, July 5, 2007). According to Kavkazky Uzel, Kadyrov said back in September 2006 that two attempts had been made on his life. “Attacks on me were organized twice,” the website quoted Kadyrov as saying at the time. “On two occasions conspiracies were carefully organized with the aim of killing me. I was [targeted] by the special services, and both times they organized the attacks on me. I gave up those who tried to kill me to the ... [law-enforcement] organs, but nothing was done to them.”

A more Byzantine version of the latest reported attack on Ramzan Kadyrov was put forward by Moskovsky Komsomolets. Citing sources in the Unified Group of Forces, the newspaper reported on July 30 that the attack took place on July 28, but overnight on July 22-23, during a meeting of Kadyrov’s inner circle convened in Tsentoroi to discuss “urgent problems in the region.” According to the newspaper, Kadyrov was handed a letter during the meeting, which turned out to be from Chechen rebel leader Dokka Umarov and stated that the pro-Moscow Chechen authorities are unable to control the situation in Chechnya and that the rebels have such a strong grip on the republic that Kadyrov cannot feel secure even in his own home. According to Moskovsky Komsomolets, the letter told Kadyrov he could see this for himself by going into his bathroom, where he would find two pistol bullets and a note. Kadyrov reportedly followed the letter’s instructions and found a note stating that he should look for a traitor in his inner circle. The newspaper reported that Kadyrov then went to his inner circle and began shouting about a traitor, after which one of them was unable to control his nerves and opened fire on Kadyrov with an automatic rifle. One of Kadyrov’s bodyguards known as “Patriot” threw himself on top of Kadyrov to shield him from the gunfire. He and another member of the Chechen president’s bodyguard detail, along with the attacker, were killed in the incident, Moskovsky Komsomolets reported.

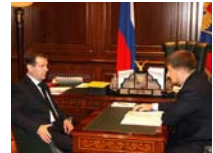
Meanwhile, Kavkaz-Center reported on July 30 that there had been not one, but two attempts on Kadyrov’s life between July 20 and 28 and that a conspiracy to kill the pro-Moscow Chechen president had been uncovered.

**Find this article at:**

**<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2374339>**

### Kadyrov Tells Medvedev All's Well as Violence in Chechnya Continues

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov told President Dmitry Medvedev during their meeting at the presidential residence in Gorki outside Moscow on July 25 that the situation in Chechnya is stable and reconstruction is accelerating. "The situation in our republic is stable both politically and socio-economically, and the process of the republic's reconstruction and construction is growing faster, gaining pace," Interfax quoted Kadyrov as saying. He added that the focus this year is on the republic's mountainous areas, noting that these areas were traditionally strong in agriculture and that their reconstruction is particularly important for the republic.



Medvedev asked about the vacations of Chechen children and the run-up to the upcoming parliamentary elections in the republic, Itar-Tass reported. According to the news agency, Kadyrov informed Medvedev that many Chechen children spend their vacations in neighboring Russian regions every year, particularly the Stavropol and Krasnodar territories. "Though we have better places than in other regions of the country," Kadyrov said, adding that he meant Chechnya's highland districts above all. Medvedev agreed that some places in the Chechen highland districts are very beautiful and said "it would be good for children to vacation not only in other Russian regions, but also at home," which would also help the republic's economy, Itar-Tass reported. Responding to Medvedev's question about Chechnya's upcoming parliamentary elections, Kadyrov said the republican authorities had decided to shift from a one-chamber to a two-chamber parliament. "It will be better for the republic on the whole to have a one-chamber parliament," Kadyrov said, adding that he hoped "people who are ready to work and approve the laws needed for the people" would be elected to the republic's parliament.

Kadyrov's meeting with the Russian president took place against the backdrop of continued low-level attacks by insurgents in Chechnya. Itar-Tass reported on July 30 that a federal Interior Ministry serviceman was killed and three others injured in a clash with gunmen the previous day. "Officers of the temporary operational police group of the Russian Interior Ministry and servicemen of the Interior Troops engaged in a fight with about 30 gunmen in a forest three kilometers away from Malye Varandy in the Grozny district on Tuesday [July 29] afternoon," a republican law-enforcement source told the news agency. "During the shootout a contract serviceman was killed, [and] the squad commander and other two contract servicemen were injured and hospitalized." According to RIA Novosti, there were no reported casualties among the gunmen.

The Associated Press, meanwhile, quoted Russia's Interior Ministry as reporting that a serviceman was killed on July 28 when a patrol was fired on near Shatoi in the mountains of southern Chechnya. RIA Novosti quoted a police source as saying the shootout took place one kilometer from the Shatoi district village of Syuzhi. "Militants ambushed servicemen on a reconnaissance mission and opened fire," the source told the news agency. "One contract serviceman was killed in the brief skirmish." The source said that the attackers escaped but that some of them may have been wounded.

On July 27, unidentified gunmen fired automatic rifles and grenade launchers at a police headquarters in the village of Khatuni in Chechnya's Vedeno district. No one in the headquarters, which is manned by police deployed from Perm Krai, was hurt in the attack, Kavkazky Uzel reported. On July 25, a 22-year-old Grozny resident who had been detained by police in the Chechen capital's central market and taken to a police headquarters in Grozny's Zavodsky district, pulled out a pistol hidden on his body, shot dead a police officer and then barricaded himself in one of the headquarters' rooms. Kavkazky Uzel reported that the detainee, who was identified as Kazbek Ibragimov and described as an "active participant in illegal armed formations" who had committed serious crimes, was himself killed when police stormed the room.

An agronomist who worked at the Roshnya state farm in Chechnya's Urus-Martan district was murdered on July 28. Kavkazky Uzel reported that the killing took place in the village of Roshin-chu when unidentified persons in camouflage uniforms took the agronomist out of his house and shot him to death. Interfax reported that after the shooting, the perpetrators, numbering between three and five, drove away in three cars toward the Urus-Martan district village of Gekhi.

Meanwhile, Chechen OMON riot police on July 24 reportedly beat and detained several dozen women who had

gathered outside of Ramzan Kadyrov's residence in Gudermes the previous day to request the Chechen president's help. Kavkazky Uzel quoted an anonymous participant in the demonstration as saying that it involved more than 100 women who had previously made a living selling goods in Grozny's central market. That market was closed down for repairs on July 14, with a whole section of the market shut down permanently. The source said that the women had gone to Gudermes to ask Kadyrov to provide a place for them where they could continue to sell their goods.

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## North Caucasus Weekly

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### Police Headquarters Bombed and Rights Activist Abducted in Ingushetia

On August 1, one policeman was killed and another wounded when they were inspecting a private home in the city of Malgobek and a group of suspected militants opened fire on them with automatic rifles and grenade launchers. The rebels escaped into a wooded area nearby but police say two of them were wounded in the shootout. Two militants were subsequently captured in the woods along with radio equipment and the owner of the private home was also detained.



At least two police officers were killed and five people wounded when a car bomb detonated outside a police station in Ingushetia's largest city, Nazran, on July 30. The Associated Press reported that republican Interior Ministry and emergency officials variously put the death toll at two or three officers, with at least three others seriously wounded. Reuters quoted police sources as saying that an explosive device equivalent to 3-4 kilograms (6.6-8.8 pounds) of TNT blew up under a vehicle in a parking lot full of service cars outside police headquarters in Nazran. However, Newsru.com reported that the explosive device was much more powerful: according to the website, preliminary data suggested the bomb had the explosive force of 50 kilograms of TNT. It quoted a security official as saying: "The explosion was of such force that two policemen deployed in Ingushetia from Nizhny Novgorod, who were in an armored UAZ car that was standing not far away from the car which blew up, died from their wounds, while another Nizhny Novgorod policeman was wounded."

RIA Novosti reported that the blast took place next to a mosque near Nazran's Interior Ministry building. "The explosion in the car triggered a chain reaction of blasts in nearby cars," a source in the republic's emergency situations ministry told the news agency, which reported that up to 15 cars were destroyed as a result of a fire caused by the blast. Kavkazky Uzel reported on July 30 that a five-year-old child was among the five people wounded in the bombing.

Meanwhile, a bomb exploded at the front gate of the home of a pensioner in Nazran on July 28. No one was hurt in the blast. On July 27, a policeman was wounded when his car came under fire near the settlement of Ekazhevo in Ingushetia's Nazran district. Itar-Tass reported that the attackers escaped in a white VAZ automobile. Overnight on July 25-26, unidentified gunmen fired on the home of Ruslan Albogachev, a deputy in Ingushetia's People's Assembly. No one was hurt in the attack.

On July 25, Zurab Tsechoev, a staffer with Ingushetia's Mashr human rights NGO, was abducted by an estimated 50 armed men wearing masks. Reuters quoted the Committee to Protect Journalists as saying that Tsechoev's abductors beat him and threatened to kill him if he did not leave the region.

The website of The Other Russia opposition group on July 26 quoted the head of the Memorial human rights group, Oleg Orlov, who provided details of the incident. "Three armored personnel carriers and three 'Gazelle' [minivans] drove up to Zurab's house in the village of Troitskaya," Orlov told the website. "About 50 people, in camouflage and armed, emerged from them, and began breaking through the gates of the house. Zurab himself came to open them. The arrivals immediately placed him on the ground, putting their weapons to him. Then, they quickly conducted a search of the dwelling, without any grounds, and drove him off with them." According to The Other Russia's website, it was unclear which branch of Russia's security services the agents belonged to. The website quoted Memorial as saying that the agents returned a computer as well as mobile telephones seized from Tsechoev and that after his release, Tsechoev was able to call Magomed Mutsolgov, the head of Mashr, and disclose his whereabouts. According to The Other Russia, Tsechoev was severely beaten and could only move around with difficulty.

The Other Russia's website quoted Tsechoev as saying that his interrogators had accused him of sending lists containing the names and addresses of law-enforcement officers to the opposition Ingushetiya.ru website. Tsechoev categorically denied this, explaining that he had no relation to any such lists or to the website, after which the officers struck him on his legs and on his back near his kidneys. Memorial suspects he may have a broken arm.

Commenting on the incident, the Committee to Protect Journalists' Europe and Central Asia Program Coordinator, Nina Ognianova, said in a statement that Ingushetia "has gained notoriety as a lawless zone where enemies of the press can attack journalists with impunity."

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## North Caucasus Weekly

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### Police in Dagestan Targeted Yet Again

A police officer and a local resident were wounded in Karabudakhkent, Dagestan, on July 30 when unidentified gunmen fired on a traffic police post. Interfax reported that the gunmen fired from a garden plot not far from the police post and that the policemen returned fire. A policeman and a passer-by were wounded in the shootout. The attackers escaped in a car. Meanwhile, the Regnum News Agency reported that a traffic police post in Dagestan's Buinaksk district was attacked by gunmen the same day but that no one was hurt in the incident.

On July 29, the head of Dagestan's inter-regional anti-organized crime directorate (UBOP) for Makhachkala and Kaspiisk, Magomed-Khabib Abdulkadyrov, received multiple gunshot wounds when his jeep came under fire from unidentified gunmen in Makhachkala. According to Kavkazky Uzel, Abdulkadyrov died on the way to the hospital.

Two policemen were wounded on July 28 when unidentified gunmen attacked a railway police building in the Khasavyurt railway station. The attackers, who used automatic weapons and grenade launchers, managed to escape. On July 25, an improvised explosive device blew up an automobile in Khasavyurt, killing a local resident.

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## North Caucasus Weekly

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### Briefs

#### Men and Women Will Swim Separately in Grozny

RIA Novosti, citing the press service of Chechnya's president and government, reported on July 24 that before the summer bathing season ends, a beach will be opened on the Chernorechensky water reservoir in Grozny with separate areas for men and women. The news agency reported that on the orders of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, amelioration of the banks of a section of the Chernorechensky water reservoir is in progress. "With due regard for our Islamic mentality, a beach where men and women will be able to spend leisure time separately will be opened after the completion of these works," Itar-Tass quoted Grozny Mayor Muslim Khuchiev as saying.

#### Chechens Arrested in Norway for Violence at Asylum Center

Police in Norway detained five Chechens on July 25 suspected of involvement in an armed attack on Kurdish refugees at an asylum center that injured 23 people, Reuters reported. Officials gave no reason for the attack, which happened on July 24 the village of Vaaler, south of Oslo. But the Norwegian news agency NTB quoted Ole Morten Lyng, an official at the center, as saying that the attack was provoked by a "minor dispute" between Kurds and Chechens at the center. Local police said that five Chechen men, aged between 21 and 43, were detained for questioning over the attack. Lyng said that between 40 and 50 Chechens armed with steel bars and other weapons attacked the center.

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**<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2374343>**



### Moscow's Favoritism Towards Cossacks Mocks Circassian History

By Fatima Tlisova

On July 19, the Circassian republic of Adygea marked the 90th anniversary of the 131st motorized rifle brigade of Cossacks located in Maykop, the region's capital. Although this Cossack brigade is a regular part of the Russian armed forces it does have one distinguishing characteristic. Regular recruits cannot be enlisted in this brigade because only those who can prove that they are hereditary Cossacks and who grew up in the Caucasus can become members of the 131st brigade.

The history of this brigade dates back to Russia's conquest of the Caucasus and in this particular case to the Russo-Circassian war of 19th century. That war lasted 101 years and resulted in the ethnic cleansing and massive deportation of the Circassians, but won the Cossacks the best lands of the Northeastern Caucasus and complete freedom of behavior. The fate of the remaining Circassians, who were mainly helpless elderly people, women and children, was in the hands of the Cossacks, who surely did not treat them with excessive consideration. The Cossacks continued ethnic cleansing and mass violence targeting the defeated and almost entirely (close to 90 percent) annihilated people even after Russia's official victory over Circassia in 1864. The operating motto of the butcher of the Caucasus, General Yermolov, was to leave no one alive who could raise a sword against Russia for the next 200 years and thereby turn a lion into a lamb. This motto was primarily meant for the Northeastern Caucasus and the Cossacks implemented it with a zeal that often went beyond the requirements of their military mandate. Unthinkable methods were used against the Circassians in order to break the spirit of the survivors. These barbaric practices included the deliberate spread of infectious diseases in the population, the destruction of crops and gardens and wholesale slaughter of domestic animals. As a result of these draconian measures entire villages perished from hunger.

The Cossacks used to say that a Circassian and a horse together cannot be defeated, and that is why one of the main tactics entailed the expropriation of horses from the Circassians. According to recorded accounts from the older generation of Circassians, Cossack brigades often encircled the Circassian villages at night and by dawn they would visit every courtyard and shoot the horses. For the Circassians, in whose language a horse and a brother are denoted by the same word, this was a real tragedy, similar to the loss of a family member. The systematic elimination of Circassian horses also took place during the years of Stalin when, under the pretext of confiscation, entire herds of thoroughbred racing horses were driven away and killed for meat, which was used in the production of sausages. In some Circassian regions today there are places called "Horse's Tear," which is how Circassian people kept memory of the locations of mass slaughter of innocent animals. This practice led to a catastrophic situation by the early 1980s, when the once famous Circassian horses numbered only in the dozens.

Assassinations, abductions and violence were essential elements of Cossack raids everywhere. The Cossack troops received the highest regalia from the Tsarist government for ridding the Northwestern Caucasus of the Circassians. The 131st Maykop Cossack brigade is the most decorated: from the Tsarist government it inherited the order of the famous Russian Field Marshal Kutuzov and from the Soviet authorities it received the order of the Red Star.

This historical background is necessary in order to explain the 90th anniversary of the 131st motorized rifle brigade of Cossacks celebrated in Maykop on July 19. The descendants of the most irreconcilable enemies together commemorated the jubilee. Does this mean that we can now speak of the triumph of tolerance and the Communist period's legacy of "friendship among peoples"? More evidence exists to the contrary, because friendship can truly exist only between equals; otherwise, it is a result of either obeying orders or gratification. It is impossible to call the Cossacks and Circassians equals either in Adygea or in any other Circassian republic. The privileged position of the Cossacks in the Caucasus is legitimized in the Russian Constitution. The Cossacks have the right to possess and carry weapons—something that is a criminal act if done by members of other ethnic groups. Cossack children enjoy privileges when it comes to admission into military academies, and they can serve their mandatory military service at home while all other young people, upon reaching the age of 18, must serve in military units located outside their native regions. The list of state privileges bestowed upon the Cossacks is a long one, but two of them are worth noting. In accordance with a special law, the head of each region in the Caucasus must have an advisor on Cossack affairs on his staff and a budget for supporting the Cossacks, while the first deputy head of the local administration in

every settlement must be a Cossack ataman. There are no similar special privileges for any other people in the region. Thus the celebration in Maykop was not a celebration of friendship between Cossacks and Circassians.

A special government commission was set up in Adygea to prepare for the anniversary. The budget for the jubilee was never made public, but the press service of the government of Adygea reported regularly about the commission's meetings and decisions. There were also no reports from the site of the celebration on local television even though the president of Republic of Adygea, Aslan Tkhakushinov, accompanied by the republic's entire cabinet of ministers, attended it. Other dignitaries invited to the celebration from various regions included Krasnodar Krai Governor Aleksandr Tkachov, Moscow Oblast Governor Boris Gromov and the head of the Russian armed forces' North Caucasus Military District, Sergei Makarov. The pompous jubilee, which included an awards ceremony, a parade by the Cossack brigade and a concert, was held for a small circle of officials in a closed zone of the 131st brigade's compound. The authorities simply did not dare to bring the holiday to the streets of Maykop.

The local authorities, who follow the Kremlin's instructions and ignore the will of the people, have accumulated enough experience of dismal failures from similar events. But first we need to go back in time. We have briefly outlined the history of the Russo-Circassian war above. Yet the present state of affairs also demands a brief background introduction. First of all, Russia never acknowledged its responsibility for crimes against the Circassian people or took steps to make up for these crimes. On the contrary, Russia impeded and continues to impede the repatriation and establishment of ties between the Circassians of the Caucasus and their diaspora abroad. As a result, only about three percent of Circassians reside in their historical homeland, while 97 percent are in the diaspora communities abroad. A declaration about recognition of the genocide that Circassian organizations sent to the president of Russia and the State Duma was categorically rejected. Adygea's political status as a republic has been under the threat of disappearance for the fourth year in a row now. Only fear of mass riots and the pressure from the influential Circassian diaspora in Jordan forced the Kremlin to delay the official process of merging Adygea and Krasnodar Krai.

However, the aggressive absorption of the region by the neighboring territory continues covertly. The Kremlin hypocritically vows not to revoke Adygea's status as a republic while practically all state structures have been officially transferred to the jurisdiction of Krasnodar and their representative offices in Adygea have either lost their status or simply been disbanded. In addition, discrimination against Circassians is especially evident in the cultural sphere. There is a constitutional ban on the official use of the Circassian language at all state institutions. It is clear that the complete infringement of civil and ethnic rights cannot have a positive impact on a people's social esteem. Similarly, the state's hypocritical nationalities policy cannot contribute to friendship between the Cossacks and the Circassians. Not only the Circassians, but all indigenous peoples of the North Caucasus view the Cossacks with suspicion and caution. In the eyes of the local population, an armed-to-the-teeth Cossack is a descendant of those who killed and raped their ancestors and is likely to do so again if he receives a corresponding order from the Kremlin.

This situation explains why the authorities decided not to turn the anniversary of the 131st Cossack brigade into a people's holiday: they would simply have failed to compel people to celebrate something that the local officials commemorate only because they are bound by duty.

The reckless Soviet and then Russian governments tried a number of times to impose common values, but all such attempts ended in failures. One example is the village of Lazarevskoye, which was named in honor of Mikhail Lazarev, the Russian admiral who distinguished himself by notable sadism in burning Circassian villages on the Black Sea coast. Lazarevskoye was a Shapsug village (the Shapsugs belong to a branch of the Circassian people that was essentially destroyed) that rose from ashes, and the Russians renamed it in honor of its executioner. However, the monument to Lazarev has not remained in the village unmolested for even a month. Despite being guarded, the monument has been repeatedly thrown off its pedestal and destroyed or covered with paint. The authorities, with the same stubbornness, refurbish it. The standoff has continued for years. There are many examples of this kind and they cannot be categorized merely as acts of vandalism, which is how they are portrayed by the Russian authorities. This is the response of a people deprived of its right to have its own history. And if responses like this continue to multiply, the entire responsibility for this will rest only with the Kremlin.

**Find this article at:**

**<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2374344>**

### From Derbent to Nazran: Rebels Step up Attacks in the North Caucasus

By Mairbek Vatchagaev

This summer, which was discussed with much fear in the offices of the pro-Moscow authorities in the North Caucasus as well as among the top brass of the Russian armed forces in the region, turned out exactly as was predicted. Militant activities by members of the resistance from Derbent to Nazran were truly unprecedented. Just in the course of one night alone—from June 23 to June 24—according to the independent Ingushetia.ru website, six armed assaults were carried out, including an attack on the prime minister of the Republic of Ingushetia, Kharun Dzeitov ([www.ingushetiya.ru/news/14895.html](http://www.ingushetiya.ru/news/14895.html)). In the morning, in plain view of the police, another assassination attempt was carried out against the Deputy Mufti of Ingushetia Kambulat Zyazikov ([www.rbcdaily.ru/2008/07/25/focus/364139](http://www.rbcdaily.ru/2008/07/25/focus/364139); North Caucasus Weekly, July 24). This was clearly meant to demonstrate to the authorities that the militants do not differentiate between day and night despite an increase in the number of police checkpoints.

In the meantime, against the backdrop of the 70 police officers, military personnel and FSB operatives who perished in the past six months ([www.ingushetiya.ru/news/14865.html](http://www.ingushetiya.ru/news/14865.html)), Ingushetia's president, Murat Zyazikov, thinks that all the blame should be laid squarely on news agencies that focus only on negative developments. According to Zyazikov, this negative information campaign is orchestrated by the United States and, of course, not without the help from the Jamestown Foundation, which is to be blamed for everything that is taking place in southern Russia. These views are presented at length in a rambling article published in 100 Natsii (100 Nations), a journal established under the aegis of Russia's Federation Council (see 100 Natsii, July 2008, No.6-7 (60-61), pp.34-39). The journalist conducting the interview with Zyazykov occasionally forgets and answers his own questions, which are supplemented by materials extracted from the archives of information agencies. Such digressions are presented as historical facts by a Moscow-based magazine that a majority of the people in Russia has never even heard of. The groundless accusation that the situation in Ingushetia is being systematically destabilized by external forces has become something of a tradition among Ingush political and cultural elites, who sincerely think that everything unfolds according to instructions from Washington. Before the breakup of the Soviet Union everything was blamed on the CIA and now all blame is heaped on the Jamestown Foundation simply because it follows and analyzes the developments in the region.

Meanwhile, as attacks on federal forces reportedly took place in Chechnya (<http://kavkaz.tv/russ/content/2008/07/24/59666.shtml>), Grozny was again accused of separatism, but this time in connection with soccer. Someone hung the flag of Kosovo, which has not been recognized by Russia, at Grozny's Sultan Bilimkhanov Stadium during a soccer game (North Caucasus Weekly, July 24) and despite rebuttals of this story in the mainstream Russian media ([www.rian.ru/society/20080721/114566450.html](http://www.rian.ru/society/20080721/114566450.html)), which claimed both that there was no flag to begin with and that it was confused with the flag of Albania, the issue will be discussed in Moscow. It is not clear how one can confuse the red flag of Albania with the blue flag of Kosovo, but it is possible that Chechen Sports Minister Khaidar Alkhanov never saw either flag in his life (a photo of the flag displayed Grozny's Sultan Bilimkhanov Stadium can be seen at [www.gazeta.ru/politics/2008/07/21\\_a\\_2788483.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2008/07/21_a_2788483.shtml)). There have also been cases of soccer fans displaying the flags of independent Ichkeria, which is risky under the present conditions of Chechnya's authoritarian regime, and those who dare to do so could face serious trouble. All of this represents different forms of popular expression of sympathy and support for the resistance fighters holed up in mountains.

The mass exodus of Chechen youth to the mountains was something that Ramzan Kadyrov particularly emphasized during his meeting with the Muftiyat (the Islamic clerical establishment) and all the imams of mosques and village kadis (Islamic judges) of the republic. Kadyrov's angry address to the meeting's participants contained several revelatory moments. He admitted that the young men continue to join the ranks of the resistance fighters in the mountains ([www.grozny-inform.ru/main.mhtml?Part=11&PubID=7937](http://www.grozny-inform.ru/main.mhtml?Part=11&PubID=7937)) and acknowledged that the village imams, despite the fact that he provided them with funds and security details, either cannot or are afraid to carry out propaganda activities against the spread of Salafi ideology. Kadyrov vowed he would hold the family and relatives of every youth who departs for the mountains responsible for the youth's decision to join the rebels. Finally, Kadyrov said that anyone in a position of authority up to the post of director with relatives who joined the militants would have to convince those relatives to return or risk losing their jobs. It will be easier to find the runaways in the rural areas, where blood ties between neighboring villages are close, and this will provide a way to get rid of this or that

government official in order to take his job. In today's Chechnya, where the official unemployment level is a staggering 75 percent and unofficially hovers close to 90 percent, Kadyrov's newly announced stipulation may further exacerbate the situation in society.

Chechnya's mullahs and imams, who receive their salaries from the authorities, are already not true representatives of society because they represent the government and this turns them into a special category of government bureaucrats. They are equated with the authorities and this leads to their removal from their communities. The day after Kadyrov made his remarks, Grozny Mayor Muslim Khuchiev, one of Kadyrov's closest confidants, convened a meeting of regional imams and kadis of the republican capital, during which he urged them to pay more attention to the socially vulnerable part of the society because children from such a background are the most likely to be susceptible to the ideas of extremism and terrorism ([www.grozny-inform.ru/main.mhtml?Part=8&PubID=7956](http://www.grozny-inform.ru/main.mhtml?Part=8&PubID=7956)). Of course, he did not disclose that the absolute majority of citizens of Chechnya fall into this category. Nor did he reveal how he intended to help them.

The authorities in Kabardino-Balkaria are preoccupied with the same problem and the odious chief ideologue and mouthpiece of Russian ideology in the North Caucasus, Ali Kazikhanov, who is editor-in-chief of the newspaper Severny Kavkaz (North Caucasus), recently offered two solutions: to agree to remain in the shadow of the "great" Russia or to remain allied with radical Islam ([www.sknews.ru/main/9096-poslednijj-zvonok.html](http://www.sknews.ru/main/9096-poslednijj-zvonok.html)). As editor-in-chief of Severny Kavkaz, Kazikhanov cannot offer anything else. This should not be surprising given that the generation that was raised on the ideas of the great Soviet Union refuses to see itself outside its borders and is horrified by the prospect that the North Caucasus could be removed from Moscow's control. Ali Kazikhanov's article clearly demonstrates this fear.

In the same issue of Severny Kavkaz, Musa Musaev, a journalist for the newspaper who comes from Dagestan, juxtaposed the arguments, rebutting Ali Kazikhanov and reaching the following rational conclusion: "... when there is a protest electorate in society because of injustice and violence, then this disenfranchised part of society becomes extremely religious and quickly adheres to the radical movements. And the lifestyle of other Dagestanis becomes simply incompatible with their lifestyle" ([www.sknews.ru/issue/9219-protestnyjj-jelektorat-dagestana-bystro.html](http://www.sknews.ru/issue/9219-protestnyjj-jelektorat-dagestana-bystro.html)).

In a spirit similar to that of the desperate outburst of the editor-in-chief of Severny Kavkaz, the press service of the President of Kabardino-Balkaria issued a press release entitled "The republic needs pro-Russian spiritual leaders" ([www.sknews.ru/regions/region07/9094-respublike-nuzhny-prorossijjski.html](http://www.sknews.ru/regions/region07/9094-respublike-nuzhny-prorossijjski.html)). In other words, the task is the same as it was during the atheistic reign of the Soviet state, when the spiritual authorities with this orientation were automatically considered by society at large to be affiliated with the KGB.

Meanwhile, on July 22, the Yarmuk Jamaat presented a roster of its activities for the spring/summer period that resembled a report by a financial organization striving to show that it is not sitting idly by (<http://kavkaz.tv/russ/content/2008/07/22/59617.shtml>). And, indeed, one cannot deny that there have been more such activities this year compared to the previous one.

Thus, the problem of youths, the reason for their departure to the mountains and the popular attitudes toward the militants worry practically all republics of the Northern Caucasus, but each sees the resolution of these issues differently. More often than not, the authorities hope to resolve these issues by force and undoubtedly with the support of Moscow. In practice, however, a solution to the accumulated problems is possible only by adopting a comprehensive approach that takes into account the interests of those who do not agree with the official point of view on this or that tenet of Islam.

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