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## **CE AMIR UMAROV APPOINTS NEW CE QADI AND DAGESTAN VALI/AMIR**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, CE vali and amir Abu Usman Dokku Umarov appointed as vali and amir of the Dagestan Vilaiyat the amir of the Dagestan Vilaiyat's Central Sector Seifullah Gubdenskii, born Magomed Vagapov, according to decrees published on July 15<sup>th</sup> on the CE-affiliated website *Kavkaz tsentr*. Vagapov was also appointed as Supreme Qadi of the Caucasus Emirate's Shariah Court (and like amir of the Madzhlisul Shura's Shariah Committee), succeeding former amir of the United Vilaiyat of Kabardia, Balkaria and Karachai (OVKBK), Anzor Astemirov (aka Seifullah) killed by security forces on March 24<sup>th</sup> of this year.<sup>1</sup> This puts Vagapov in the ranks of the CE's top handful of leading amirs. In addition to having been previously the amir commanding the Dagestan mujahedin's Central Sector, Vagapov, prior to becoming amir of Dagestan's Central Sector, was amir of that sector's Gubden district mujahedin. Prior to that he was amir of Karabudakhkent and Sergokalin (referred to by the mujahedin as Shuabkalin) Jamaat.

Thus, in little over a year he has risen from this last mentioned position to become vali and amir of the Dagestan mujahedin and *qadi* for the entire Caucasus Emirate network. This meteoric rise may be the consequence of being one of the last living mujahedin having a connection to the organization of the March 29<sup>th</sup> Moscow subway bombings carried out by two female suicide bombers from Dagestan. Shortly after those attacks, Vagapov was said to be under hot pursuit by Russian security forces in connection with the Moscow attack. Also, Dagestan has been the center of gravity for CE operations since this spring, moving into the vanguard of the jihad ahead of Ingushetia, which had been the locus of the highest number of attacks since summer 2007. In addition, on May 30<sup>th</sup> Vagapov's Central Sector was one of only two groups of mujahedin to hold a shura. CE central has still not held a shura this year, missing its annual spring planning shura, and the only other reported shura was that held by the OVKBK amirs. It was, however, quite small compared to the Dagestan Central Sector shura. The former gathered six or so amirs, as can be seen from the video, whereas the Central Sector shura convened 19 amirs and naibs, including Vagapov. The high number of attacks carried out by this sector and the sector's high degree of organization seem to have recommended Vagapov for his new appointments.

Some may have questioned the extent of the Dagestan mujahedin's integration with the CE. With the appointment of a Dagestani to the important post of the CE *qadi*, it is now clear that previous loyalty pledges by the leading Dagestani mujahedin to CE amir Abu Usman Dokku Umarov were real and the Dagestani mujahedin are part and parcel of the CE jihadi network.

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## **CE "G'ALG'AICHE VILAIYAT" MUJAHEDIN ANNOUNCE REVENGE ATTACK AGAINST MOLE WHO HELPED CAPTURE AMIR 'MAGAS'**

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<sup>1</sup> «Amir modzhakhedov Dagestana i verkhovnym kadiem IK naznachen Seifullah Gubdenskii,» *Kavkaz tsentr*, 15 July 2010, 02:12, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/07/15/73805.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/07/15/73805.shtml).

On July 7<sup>th</sup>, the command of the mujahedin in Ingushetia [called “G’alg’aiche Vilaiyat” (GV) or G’alg’aiche Province by the mujahedin] announced they had “liquidated” a mole who had infiltrated their ranks and helped Russian and Ingushetian security capture ‘Magas’ Akhmad Yevloev, the amir of the G’alg’aiche Vilaiyat mujahedin and military amir for the entire CE. The mole was identified as Timur Argelsov. The GV command claims that after having prayed to Allah, they received a tip from someone within the “infidel’s secret services” that helped them find and kill Argelsov. They also claimed that their informant decided to help the mujahedin take revenge against the agent because the authorities do not simply want to destroy the mujahedin but have as their goal the instigation of a civil war in Ingushetia. Toward this end, Argelsov was also assigned to infiltrate the region’s Sufi brotherhoods, the GC command claims. One commentator in the internet discussion following the statement claims that “all” the mujahedin were members of the Sufi brotherhoods earlier, suggesting there is considerable crossover from the tariqats to the jihadi jamaats.<sup>2</sup>

The GV command claims that Argelsov penetrated one of its jamaats two years ago and asked to be deployed as a sniper, a role in which he was “well-trained” and “first-class.” He created horror among the apostates but only killed rank-and-file police. Asked by mujahedin fighters why he shot only rank-and-file police, Argelsov retorted that they are all the same and they need to be wiped out. All the while Argelsov informed on GV jamaat amirs, handing over to the authorities their addresses and license plate numbers. Argelsov achieved the rank of amir but then stopped carrying out sniper attacks. According to the GV command, “many mujahedin and amirs became martyrs” as a result of the intelligence he handed over to the security services.<sup>3</sup>

The operation to seize Argelsov and then execute did not go as planned. When they attempted to seize him in Sukharkhi on June 21<sup>st</sup>, they were forced to open fire, as apparently Argelsov resisted, and as a result “there was nothing left of the *munafik*’s (hypocrite’s) head but his lower jaw,” the command gruesomely details.<sup>4</sup>

The GV command’s statement reveals that there was some “concern” within its ranks and/or among Muslims who support the mujahedin regarding the command’s long silence since Magas’s capture. They explained their silence had a “logical explanation” - the need to maintain secrecy as they planned revenge against those who were involved in Magas’s capture. There was also concern, at least for one of the discussants in the commentary section that followed the article, about whether Argelsov may have played a role in Sheikh Said Abu Saad Buryatskii’s killing by Russian forces in March in the Ingushetian village of Ekazhevo. Buryatskii operated mostly among the GV mujahedin. Another commentator provided detailed information about how to detect whether someone is listening into your cell phone, iPhone, or other communications equipment.

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<sup>2</sup> “Zayavlenie komandovaniya mudzhakhidov vilaiyata G’alg’aiche,” *Hunafa.com*, 7 July 2010, 3:03, <http://hunafa.com/?p=3684>.

<sup>3</sup> “Zayavlenie komandovaniya mudzhakhidov vilaiyata G’alg’aiche,” *Hunafa.com*, 7 July 2010, 3:03, <http://hunafa.com/?p=3684>.

<sup>4</sup> “Zayavlenie komandovaniya mudzhakhidov vilaiyata G’alg’aiche,” *Hunafa.com*, 7 July 2010, 3:03, <http://hunafa.com/?p=3684>.

This suggests that perhaps this was one method used by Argelson to gather information. Another called for a multi-stage process of bringing recruits into the jihadi network.<sup>5</sup>

## **MORE DETAILS ON THE MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup> MOSCOW SUBWAY SHAKHIDKA MARYAM SHARIPOVA**

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> the Russian website *Slon.ru* published the transcript of a television interview on the program ‘Here and Now’ on Russia’s cable channel Dozhd TV with journalist Dmitrii Belyakov, who traveled to the home of Maryam Sharipova, one of two female suicide bombers who attacked the Moscow subway on March 29, 2010, killing 40 and wounding over 100. According to Belyakov, he visited the Sharipov home in Balakhani, Dagestan before the March attacks because he wanted to meet with Sharipova’s father, Rasul Sharipov, who is a well-known ulema (Islamic scholar) in the region. When Belyakov asked Sharipov whether he was a Wahhabi, the latter answered: “Let us dispense with those terms because I simply preach ‘pure’ Islam.” Belyakov then related his inadvertent meeting with the ulem’s daughter and future suicide bomber:

It was nothing out of the ordinary. I had a very simple conversation with her. First we made small talk. She brought me some food and set the table.

I remember we ate khinkali and it was delicious. The conversation, however, never went beyond this point – ‘bring this to me or pass this to me’ -- because this was the Caucasus. I had no right to get into a conversation with a woman in someone else's home -- the wife or daughter of the homeowner. I wanted to make a good impression, so I had brought a box of chocolates and some tea with me from Moscow. With Rasul's permission, I presented them to Mariam as a gift. He called her and said: “This Russian man wants to give you a present.”

She smiled and asked: “What is your religion?”

I replied: “I am a baptized Christian.”

“Do you want to convert to Islam?”

“No, because I was baptized, so I cannot change my religion.”

“In other words, you will not become a Muslim?”

“No, I will not.”

“If the Prophet Muhammad wants you to, you will.”

“But why would the Prophet Muhammad need me? Why would Allah need me? I am a sinner, after all.”

Then she answered me with a completely different expression on her face.

It was as if she had changed into a different person: “If everyone in the world was a Muslim, it would be so wonderful. Why are some people so afraid of this?” Then she turned around and left the room.

Belyakov also described his return to Balakhani after the attack:

Yes, I went back there 10 days after the terrorist act. People there remembered I had been there before this happened. And I was the only one walking around there with my cameras, accompanied by Rasul again, because I would not have been able to go anywhere alone. He explained the fine distinctions: Women, even schoolgirls, could not

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<sup>5</sup> “Zayavlenie komandovaniya mudzhakhidov vilaiyata G’alg’aiche,” *Hunafa.com*, 7 July 2010, 3:03, <http://hunafa.com/?p=3684>.

be photographed, for example. There were no apparent changes in the village. There was no sign that anything had happened, because this was the Caucasus. Rasul did not shed a single tear, he expressed the standard words of sympathy for the victims of the terrorist acts, and he said he could not understand how his daughter could have committed this terrible act. Her mother was sobbing, because she is a woman. And she had this to say: "I do not understand how she could do this to me" -- because they, the mother and daughter, were extremely close. They slept together, in the same room, in the same bed. And she seemed to be a good daughter.<sup>6</sup>

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## AL-AWLAKI'S PRESENCE ON CE SITES CONTINUES

CE websites continue to highlight Yemeni-based Al Qa`ida recruiter Anwar al-Awlaki, who has prepared several jihadis who attacked or attempted attacks on the U.S., including the Fort Hood attack and the 'Christmas' or 'underpants' bomber, who attempted to detonate explosives on a civilian flight over Detroit. On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, the CE network's United Viliayyat of Kabardia, Balkaria and Karachai operating in the KBR and KChR published an article by, and interview with al-Awlaki under the title 'The Religion of Allah is Serious and Needs A Serious Person'. The material was ostensibly translated into Russian by a "brother from Kyrgyzstan."<sup>7</sup> Ten days later Islamdin carried a brief profile of al-Awlaki and his education written by Sheikh Shumail Khamud al-Akhdal.<sup>8</sup> Al-Awlaki is not the first Al Qa`ida-tied jihadist the CE has developed ties with. The CE, especially the United Viliayyat of Kabardia, Balkaria and Karachai, also has developed a close relationship with the global jihad's chief ideologist, Abu Muhammad Asem al-Maqdisi (See IIPER, No. 6). It remains unclear whether al-Awlaki is recruiting among CE operatives for attacks on the U.S. or other Western countries.

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## WAS JUNE 30TH GROZNYI SUICIDE BOMBER A LONE TERRORIST?

According to unidentified sources in Russian law enforcement cited by *Kavkaz uzel*, 22-year old Chechen resident Adam Khamidov, who detonated a suicide vest in the center of the Chechen capitol on June 30<sup>th</sup>, was not a member of the CE jihadi network. However, Khamidov's brother is an active member, according to the same source. The

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<sup>6</sup> "'Ya khotel ponyat', mozhno li s etim religioznym techeniem zhit' v mire'," *Slon.ru*, 23 June 2010, 12:56, <http://slon.ru/articles/415505/>.

<sup>7</sup> Sheikh Anwar al-Awlaki, "Religiya Allakha ser'eznaya, i trebuet ser'eznogo cheloveka," *Islamdin*, 3 July 2010, 17:00, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=827:2010-07-03-17-07-57&catid=28:2009-02-12-22-12-32&Itemid=27](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=827:2010-07-03-17-07-57&catid=28:2009-02-12-22-12-32&Itemid=27).

<sup>8</sup> Sheikh Shumail Khamud al-Akhdal, "Gde I u kogo uchilsya imam Anuar al'-Aulyaki (da zashchitit ego Allakh)," *Islamdin*, 13 July 2010, 03:04, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=839:2010-07-13-03-08-42&catid=20:2009-02-08-20-35-36&Itemid=27](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=839:2010-07-13-03-08-42&catid=20:2009-02-08-20-35-36&Itemid=27).

attack was aimed at the republic's leadership, including Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, which was in Grozny's central theatre when he detonated the bomb trying to enter the building, killing one and wounding seven.<sup>9</sup>

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## DAGESTANI MUJAHEDIN DECLARE SNIPER ATTACKS

On June 16<sup>th</sup>, a "subunit of mujahedin" called "*Tavakkul*" under the Central Sector in CE's declared Dagestan Vilaiyat warned that it will carry out sniper operations similar to that carried out in mid-June against "apostates" in Dagestan's capital Makhachkala (called by the insurgents 'Shamilkala'). *Tavvakul* is led by its amir Khalid and his naib Khattab, according to the report.<sup>10</sup> The announcement's title composed presumably by the website 'Jamaat Shariat' refers to the "renewal of sniper operations," an apparent reference to the wave of sniper attacks in Dagestan and Ingushetia in early 2009.

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## VIDEO OF SHURA OF CE'S CENTRAL SECTOR IN CHECHNYA POSTED

On July 20<sup>th</sup> a video of an April 7, 2010 shura convened by the CE mujahedin's Eastern Front in Chechnya was posted on *Kavkaz tsentr*. There has been a long delay in the appearance of this video and an apparent failure still to convene the annual general CE shura this spring or even this summer. This perhaps suggests either disarray, regrouping and/or extra security precautions on the part of the CE command given the spate of killings this year of several leading indigenous and foreign CE amirs and the capture of the CE's military amir and amir of the CE's G'ial'gaiche Vilaiyat (Ingushetia) Ali Taziev (alias Magas also aka Magomed Yevloev). The video is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkPBUuO0SIg&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkPBUuO0SIg&feature=player_embedded).

In the video and a subsequent article by the Eastern Front's deputy commander, amir Mansur (born Khusein Gakaev), discrepancies are pointed out in Russian security organs and media claims about the killing Arab mercenary Abu Halid and amir of the of the village of Tevzan in Vedeno district, Ilman Estamirov in a battle with Russian and Chechen forces on February 4-5, 2010, noting that both amirs are still alive. They also state that in one news report on Abu Walid a photograph of the Jordanian Muhammad, who is a naib of the CE's military amir.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "Podorvavshiisya v Groznom smertnik ne byl v ryadakh boevikov, soobshchayut v militsii," *Kavkaz uzel*, 30 June 2010, 23:10, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/170974/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/170974/).

<sup>10</sup> "Modzhakhedy Podrazdeleniye Tavakkul' TsS VD Predupredili Murtadov o Vozobnovlenii Snaipersikh Operatsii," *Jamaat Shariat*, 16 June 2010, [www.jamaatshariat.com/ru/new/15-new/911-2010-06-16-18-06-50.html](http://www.jamaatshariat.com/ru/new/15-new/911-2010-06-16-18-06-50.html).

<sup>11</sup> "Amir Mansur (Khusein Gakaev): 'Nashi zhizni nakhodyatsya v rukakh Allakha!'," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 19 July 2010, 11:23, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/07/19/73909.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2010/07/19/73909.shtml).

## **FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBER CELL ALLEGEDLY UNCOVERED IN DAGESTAN**

On July 12th, the National Antiterrorism Committee (NAK) announced that Russian security forces, after receiving information about plans to commit major terrorist attacks in Dagestan, had uncovered in Dagestan's capitol Makhachkala a cell of six shakhidkas (female suicide bombers) often referred to as 'black widows', a phenomenon that remains peculiarly prevalent among the Caucasus Emirate mujahedin as compared with other fronts in the global jihadi revolutionary movement. Along with the six alleged would-be black widows, two male handlers were arrested. One of them allegedly accompanied from Dagestan to Moscow the two female suicide bombers who blew themselves up on Moscow's subway system on March 29th killing forty and wounding more than one hundred. The shakhidkas' ages ranged from 15 to 29 years. Four of the six suicide bombers were widows of CE fighters killed by Russian forces, and two had previously been brought up on charges of illegal possession of weapons and then had disappeared as missing persons. NAK officials said the shakhidkas had been about to be deployed and had already written farewell letters and that 2 suicide belts, 2 pistols, and address books with license plate numbers of law enforcement officials written down, and radical jihadist literature, had been confiscated during their detention.<sup>12</sup>

Later reports by the detainees lawyers denied that any suicide belts or farewell letters had been written and that two of the females had been released. One of the released was one of two sisters, 15-year old Zalina Akaev and 20-year old Zaira Akaev. According to her lawyer, Zaira, is charged with illegal weapons possession and was married to former mujahed Magomed Ismailov who was killed in November 2009 along with two other mujahedin when they attacked the commander of Dagestan's Special Rapid Response Troops (SOBR), Shapugulla Aligadzhiev. The two sisters had disappeared in spring after they and their older sister were forbidden from wearing the hijab by their parents. The oldest sister had been the first to do so and continued after her husband was killed apparently in a special operation against the mujahedin. The girls' father said he doubted his eldest daughter's husband was connected with the terrorists because he was an invalid and a person not easily offended.<sup>13</sup>

Also arrested on July 9<sup>th</sup> were a girlfriend of Zaira's and one Fatima and one Maryam. The two men arrested were Marat Shikhshaidov and one Gamzat. On July 10<sup>th</sup> a sixth alleged would-be shakhidka, 23-year old Madina Gadzhiev, was arrested. All the girls were friends from school. According to her brother Rustam, Madina was never married, graduated from Dagestan State University's Language Faculty, and was currently working in an outdoors market. Charges have been brought against only one

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<sup>12</sup> "V Dagestane zaderzhany vosem' podozrevaemykh v prichastnosti k terroristicheskoj deyatel'nosti," *Kavkaz uzal*, 12 June 2010, 20:25, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/171528/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/171528/); "Zaderzhannyie v Dagestane zhenshiny gotovilis' stat' smertnitsami, utverzhdavut v FSB," *Kavkaz uzal*, 13 July 2010, 11:32, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/171554/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/171554/); and Clifford J. Levy, "Russian Suicide Bomb Ring Foiled, Government Says," *New York Times*, 12 July 2010, [www.nytimes.com/2010/07/13/world/europe/13russia.html?\\_r=1&ref=russia](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/13/world/europe/13russia.html?_r=1&ref=russia).

<sup>13</sup> "V Dagestane devushki, Obyavlennyie silovikami smertitsami, ushli iz doma posle zapreshcheniya nosit' khidzhab," *Kavkaz uzal*, 13 July 2010, 18:07, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/171571/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/171571/) and Sergei Minenko, "Zhivyye 'smertnitsy'," *Vremya*, 14 July 2010, [www.vremya.ru/print/257874.html](http://www.vremya.ru/print/257874.html).

detainee so far and that for illegal possession of firearms. According to the daily *Vremya*, the MVD and Prosecutor's Investigation Committee stated they had no information on the case or the investigation and that new cases were opened in connection with the March Moscow subway bombings.<sup>14</sup>

If any of the charges stick, this then could be a cell of the so-called 'Riyadus-Salikhin Martyrs' Battalion that IIPER frequently has detailed and that was revived by CE amir Dokku Abu Usman Umarov in 2008, as announced by him in April 2009.

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## RECENT OFFICIAL STATISTICS ON JIHAD-RELATED CASUALTIES AND NUMBER OF MUJAHEDIN

According to official data disclosed by the Chechen MVD on May 24<sup>th</sup>, approximately 30 mujahedin were killed and 90 mujahedin and jihadi facilitators were captured in the first four months of 2010. The Chechen MVD also reports that there are "more than 190" mujahedin fighting in the republic, while the FSB estimates there are 400-500.<sup>15</sup> Updated data from Chechen law enforcement officials for the first six months of this year indicated that 49 mujahedin were killed in Chechnya during that period, almost 150 were detained, and 23 turned themselves in to the authorities.<sup>16</sup> At United Russia's conference in Kislovodsk, Stavropol, Prime Minister Putin claimed that approximately 100 militants had been killed in the first half of the year across the North Caucasus. According to the daily *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, "open sources" show some 40 MVD and military personnel killed in Chechnya in the first six months and 97 killed and 185 wounded during the period from April 16, 2009 to April 16, 2010. The Kremlin ended the official counter-terrorist operation for all of Chechnya on April 16<sup>th</sup> of last year.<sup>17</sup>

Approximately a month earlier Deputy Chief of Russia's MVD Alexander Smirnyi reported that annually the MVD suffers 400 killed in fighting terrorism. This is a much higher figure than ever disclosed before by Russian authorities or recorded by most independent sources. IIPER's own figures show 412 'state agents' killed in 2008 and 376 in 2009. Although these figures are made up of mostly MVD personnel killed, but they also include military, intelligence and civilian officials and personnel. This suggests that the higher figures reported in the range from which IIPER's estimate is calculated may be a closer reflection of the real level of violence perpetrated and caused by the mujahedin. General Smirnyi also reported that since 1999 1,366 "irrecoverable losses", presumably meaning killed, and 7,705 hospitalizations as a result of combat with Chechen separatists and now Caucasus mujahedin. *Nezavisimaya gazeta* also reported that there are 10,000 MVD troops deployed for 180-day tours to the North Caucasus from

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<sup>14</sup> Sergei Minenko, "Zhivyye 'smertnitsy'," *Vremya*, 14 July 2010, [www.vremya.ru/print/257874.html](http://www.vremya.ru/print/257874.html).

<sup>15</sup> Muslim Ibragimov, "V Chechne vozbuzhdeno ugolovnoe delo protiv press-sekretarya Dokku Umarova," *Kavkaz uzal*, 4 June 2010, 09:00, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/169718/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/169718/).

<sup>16</sup> Vladimir Mukhin, "Pechal'nyie rekordy Chechni," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 20 July 2010, [www.ng.ru/regions/2010-07-20/5\\_chechnia.html](http://www.ng.ru/regions/2010-07-20/5_chechnia.html).

<sup>17</sup> Vladimir Mukhin, "Pechal'nyie rekordy Chechni," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 20 July 2010, [www.ng.ru/regions/2010-07-20/5\\_chechnia.html](http://www.ng.ru/regions/2010-07-20/5_chechnia.html).

other regions of Russia; this equals the number of MVD personnel permanently stationed in Chechnya.<sup>18</sup>

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### **ETHNIC RUSSIAN MUJAHEDIN IN WAZIRISTAN?**

*Islamdin*, the website of the CE network's United Viliayat of Kabardia, Balkaria and Karachai operating in the KBR and KChR, published a poem "Under the Infidel" by one Amin, identifying himself as a Russian ('russkii', that is, an ethnic Russian) mujahed in Waziristan, Pakistan.<sup>19</sup>

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### **KBR DEPUTY PROSECUTOR DESCRIBES COUNTER-TERRORISM AND TERRORISM STATISTICS FOR THE REPUBLIC**

The Kabardino-Balkaria Republic's deputy prosecutor Artur Makhov claims that the crime situation in the republic is influencing the "terrorist underground" and extremist nationalism there. Although these groups use different methods, they have the goal of destabilizing the republic in common, he claimed. Presumably, the authorities feel that in this way the nationalists are assisting the jihadists. He also reported that businessmen are paying "a tribute" or poll tax to the mujahedin. He did not say whether he meant the Islamic 'zakat', using the Russian word *dan*'. Explanatory work among the population, he explained, is being carried out at gatherings in population centers in the republic and that it was necessary to involve each member of society in the struggle against the terrorists. Deputy head of the KBR Procuracy's Investigative Committee reported official statistics for the first five months of 2010 on the number of jihadi attacks on law enforcement officials - 37, the number of law enforcement personnel killed - 12, and the number of mujahedin killed - 5.<sup>20</sup>

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### **THREE CHECHENS ARRESTED ON TERRORISM CHARGES IN FRANCE**

In the early morning of July 5<sup>th</sup>, French police and security carried out a special counter-terrorism operation arresting five Chechens, three men aged 21-36 and two women, in several districts across the city of Le Mans. Police confiscated paper documents, computer equipment, and telephones were confiscated. The five suspects

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<sup>18</sup> Vladimir Mukhin, "Otkomandirovannyie na voinu," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 21 June 2010, [www.ng.ru/regions/2010-06-21/2\\_kavkaz.html](http://www.ng.ru/regions/2010-06-21/2_kavkaz.html).

<sup>19</sup> Amin - Russkii mujahed v Vaziristane, "Pod kufrom," *Islamdin*, 6 July 2010, 22:22, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=831:2010-07-06-22-40-55&catid=36:2009-11-12-19-39-41&Itemid=32](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=831:2010-07-06-22-40-55&catid=36:2009-11-12-19-39-41&Itemid=32).

<sup>20</sup> "Makhov: v Kabardino-Balkarii mnogie biznesmeny platyat dan' terroristam," *Kavkaz uzal*, 23 June 2010, 01:30, [www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/170563/](http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/170563/).

were taken to DCRI (The Direction Centrale du Renseignement Interieur or Central Directorate of Interior Intelligence) headquarters in Levallois -Perret (Hauts-de-Seine), but the two women were released by evening. One of the three males was described as an imam and father of five. French counter-terrorism was tipped off by Russian security after they arrested a Chechen citizen in Moscow in possession of weapons, explosives, plans for making bombs, and a residence permit issued by France's Prefecture de la Sarthe. Russian investigators also discovered that the wife of the arrested Chechen lives in Le Mans. The three males who remain in custody were arraigned on July 9<sup>th</sup> and indicted for "criminal association in relation with a terrorist enterprise." Since 2002, a hundred people have been jailed in the fight against terrorism in France, according to the figures given to the French parliament by the then Minister of the Interior Nicholas Sarkozy on 23 November 2005. In 2002, French security services uncovered a 'Chechen group' in the suburbs of Lyon and Paris suspected of preparing terrorist attacks against France. This group was organized around the Benchellali family, of Algerian origin. The father was an imam in the working-class area of Minguettes, who together with a nurse had founded a humanitarian association called 'Openness' together with a nurse in the 1980s. These two collected funds, medicine and supplies 'for the Chechen cause' and regularly traveled to Bosnia bringing humanitarian aid. In 1993, Benchellali was captured by the Croatians, who suspected him of being an Islamic soldier. He was tortured and then released after several months. His son left with some friends for Chechnya to fight the Russian army in the first war.<sup>21</sup>

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## **ANZOR ASTEMIROV – SEIFULLAH: A PROFILE – PART 2:**

### **ASTEMIROV AND THE UNITED COMBAT JAMAAT 'YARMUK'**

Additional pressure was placed on the JKB's unity and restraint by the emergence of the Islamic Combat Jamaat 'Yarmuk', and Astemirov would be one of the first top JKB leaders to join Yarmuk's jihad. Many JKB members admired 'Yarmuk' which exploded onto the KBR scene with major terrorist attacks in 2004. Yarmuk's emergence was in part the result of the Kokov' regime's aggressive crackdown on Muslims, something JKB members had also experienced.<sup>22</sup> But it was also the direct result of the Chechen war and ChRI recruitment, led by Basaev and Khattab, and financial support. The same was true for Astemirov's and then Mukozhev's decision to join Yarmuk and ally it with the ChRI. Simultaneously, the need for additional forces for the second war and the growing regime-Muslim tensions within the KBR seem to have encouraged the increasingly pan-Caucasus and jihadi-oriented ChRI to expand there, and it would find willing recruits in Astemirov and Mukozhev.

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<sup>21</sup> "Double anti-terrorist operation in Le Mans," *Lemans Maville*, 5 July 2010, [http://www.lemans.maville.com/actu/actudet\\_-Double-operation-antiterroriste-au-Mans\\_-dep-1440912\\_actu.Htm](http://www.lemans.maville.com/actu/actudet_-Double-operation-antiterroriste-au-Mans_-dep-1440912_actu.Htm).

<sup>22</sup> Zhukov, *Kabardino-Balkariya: Na puti k katastrofe*; Raskin and Kuklev, "Chechnya Metastasis"; and "Akhmet. Yarlykapov: Nuzhno seryezno korrektirovat politiku v otnoshenii Islama na Severnom Kavkaze," *Islam.ru*, 28 October 2005, [www.islam.ru/pressclub/gost/yrlikav/](http://www.islam.ru/pressclub/gost/yrlikav/).

In the wake of the summer 2002 Majlisul Shura that consolidated the power of local and foreign jihadists within the ChRI, it kicked off an insurgency strategy of expanding the jihad far beyond the borders of Chechnya by establishing a network of combat jamaats across the North Caucasus.<sup>23</sup> According to the KBR MVD, Yarmuk was formed in the summer 2002 in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge by KBR residents who had joined Basaev-allied Chechen separatist field commander Ruslan Gelayev's detachment there. Gelayev reportedly appointed 28-year old Muslim Atayev to form Yarmuk because he had enjoyed great authority among local young Muslims as amir of the Kabardino-Balkaria Battalion fighting in Chechnya.<sup>24</sup> Like Astemirov would later, Atayev took the name Seifullah and recruited some 30 like-minded Muslims, some of whom had taken part in fighting against Russian forces in Chechnya and undergone sabotage training in Khattab's camps. In November 2002, as part of Gelayev's detachment, they crossed the Georgian-Russian border and in the region of Galashki in Ingushetia and joined battle with federal forces. When Gelayev's unit returned to Chechnya, Atayev's unit was ordered to the KBR where they were to go into hiding, try to strengthen the detachment with new recruits and weapons, and await further orders. Yarmuk's core of 11 members led by Atayev returned to the republic, and while the others followed individually to avoid detection.<sup>25</sup>

Atayev developed new ties among the local radicals and through them managed to contact Basaev. In August 2003, police were alerted to Basaev's presence in the KBR village of Baksan. Special police and FSB units surrounded Basaev's hideout, but he and two associates managed to escape. In the process Basaev was wounded in both legs and his nephew Hadim, who was also chief of Basaev's personal guards, blew himself up while attacking the local police chief. Rumors had it that Basaev was in KBR to form a local network of underground Islamic paramilitary jamaats.<sup>26</sup> During his visit to the KBR

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<sup>23</sup> Gordon M. Hahn, *Russia's Islamic Threat* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 40-46.

<sup>24</sup> Timur Samedov, "Podozrevaemye iz 'Yarmuka'," *Kommersant Daily*, 15 December 2004, p. 4; Fatima Tlisova, "Kabardino-Balkariya Fears Spread of Terror," IWPR Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 255, 29 September 2004; Ksenya Solyanskaya, "Oni vozneslis na nebo," *Gazeta.ru*, 28 January 2005, [www.gazeta.ru/2005/01/28/oa\\_146501.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/2005/01/28/oa_146501.shtml); and RFERL Newslines Vol. 9, No. 21, 2 February 2005.

<sup>25</sup> Samedov, "Podozrevaemye iz 'Yarmuka'"; Timur Samedov, "Prishol, uvidel, i ushol," *Kommersant Daily*, 20 August 2004, pp. 1 and 6; Aleksandra Larintseva, Timur Samedov, and Olga Allenova, "Koltso kavkazskoi natsionalnosti," *Kommersant-Vlast*, 29 September – 5 October 2003, p. 20; Valerii Khatzhukov, "Kabardino-Balkariya Crackdown on Islamists," IWPR'S Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 199, August 2003; and Samedov, "Nad Nalchikom navisla 'oranzhevaya revolyutsiya.'" Basaev's presence was revealed to police and security officers during testimony by Zarema Mahadzheva, a Chechen woman who had attempted to blow herself in Moscow. *Russkiy kurier*, August 2003 cited in "Martial Law Declared in Kabardino-Balkaria." In a November 2004 interview, Basaev himself claimed that he is constantly on the move and mentioned stays in Kabardino-Balkariya. RFERL Caucasus Report, 5 November 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Samedov, "Podozrevaemye iz 'Yarmuka'"; Timur Samedov, "Prishol, uvidel, i ushol," *Kommersant Daily*, 20 August 2004, pp. 1 and 6; Aleksandra Larintseva, Timur Samedov, and Olga Allenova, "Koltso kavkazskoi natsionalnosti," *Kommersant-Vlast*, 29 September – 5 October 2003, p. 20; Valerii Khatzhukov, "Kabardino-Balkariya Crackdown on Islamists," IWPR'S Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 199, August 2003; and Samedov, "Nad Nalchikom

Basayev put his imprimatur on the new 'Yarmuk' combat jamaat. The claim by one FSB general that Basaev's close associate, the late Saudi Al Qa`ida (AQ) operative Khattab "increasingly withdrew from the Chechens and came increasingly to trust Karachais and Kabardins" suggests that Yarmuk's emergence was part of a ChRI/AQ strategy to expand the jihad to the western North Caucasus Muslim republics.<sup>27</sup>

Yarmuk's jihadist goals could be ascertained from its very name. Yarmuk is the name of a river forming the border between Israel and Jordan and the site in 636 A.D. of one of the greatest military victories in Islam's early expansion into non-Islamic lands. Yarmuk and its allies' statements were replete with references to Allah, citations from the Koran and Shariat law, and the attendant language and ideology of the global jihadi revolutionary movement. On 23 August 2004, Yarmuk issued on *Kavkaz tseñtr* an official proclamation of its founding in starkly Islamist terms: "We may die but others will follow. The Muslims of the Caucasus will live on. Finally, we pay homage to God, the Lord of the worlds. We ask for His help and pray for His forgiveness. God is Great!"<sup>28</sup> Writing in the wake of amir Ataev's death in December 2004, Mukozhev declared in strict takfirist fashion that all Muslims failing to join the jihad against the infidels would render themselves non-believers and having having "left Islam" would be worthy only of death.<sup>29</sup>

On 18 August 2004, Yarmuk emerged from the shadows. Armed with automatic weapons and grenade throwers, eight Yarmuk mujahedin engaged as many as 400 members of the security forces equipped with armoured vehicles and two helicopters for eight hours in forests near Chegem. Six Yarmuk fighters managed to escape.<sup>30</sup> The ChRI connection to Yarmuk was confirmed when the separatists' website *Kavkaz-Tseñtr* posted Yarmuk's declaration regarding its first battle in "the war that Putin unleashed in Chechnya": "Now the mujahedin have started active military operations in Kabardino-Balkariya."<sup>31</sup> Astemirov may have already joined Yarmuk by this time. In early

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navisla 'oranzhevaya revolyutsiya.'" Basaev's presence was revealed to police and security officers during testimony by Zarema Mahadzheva, a Chechen woman who had attempted to blow herself in Moscow. *Russkiy kurier*, August 2003 cited in "Martial Law Declared in Kabardino-Balkaria." In a November 2004 interview, Basaev himself claimed that he is constantly on the move and mentioned stays in Kabardino-Balkariya. RFERL Caucasus Report, 5 November 2004.

<sup>27</sup> See the interview with FSB Lieutenant General Ivan Mironov in *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 10 September 2002.

<sup>28</sup> "Kabardino-Balkarskii Jamaat Obyavlyat Jihad," *Kavkaz-Tseñtr*, 23 August 2004, 1130 GMT, [www.kavkazcenter.net](http://www.kavkazcenter.net).

<sup>29</sup> "Dzhikhad dlya musulman Kabardino-Balkarii obyazatelen."

<sup>30</sup> Two militants and two members of the security forces were killed and four police were wounded. One report had it that the band had been targeting the *siloviki*, in this case the KBR's MVD chief Lieutenant General Khachim Shogenov, whose dacha is not far from the scene of the battle. Other police sources said that 10 kilograms of TNT found in the group's car may have been intended for a terrorist act at Nalchik airport. Samedov, "Prishol, uvidel, i ushol"; ITAR-TASS, 1547 GMT, 19 August 2004; Chernysheva, "Militants Suspected of Killing Tourists Slain in Kabardino-Balkaria," Itar-Tass, 20 August 2004; Rechkalov, "Eti mestnyie rebyaty, no yavno pobyvali v Chechne"; and *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 20 August 2004 cited in RFERL Newslines, Vol. 8, No. 159, 20 August 2004.

<sup>31</sup> Roman Kiloyev, "'Day of Ingushetia' for Kabardino-Balkaria," *Kavkaz-Tseñtr*, 22 August 2004, 11:22, [www.kavkazcenter.net](http://www.kavkazcenter.net).

December, Yarmuk militants attacked a representative of KBR administration for the Federal Anti-Narcotics Service (FSNK) and the chief of a strict regime penal colony in the KBR. In the attack on the latter MVD Colonel Mukhtar Altuyev was seriously wounded but survived. However, his 16-year old son was killed in the attack.<sup>32</sup>

On the evening of December 13-14, Astemirov himself, along with Ilyas Gorchkhanov, led Yarmuk's most audacious attack, a raid on the FSNK headquarters in the KBR's capitol of Nalchik that killed four, including three police officers, led to the capture of a large cache of weapons in the attack.<sup>33</sup> Claiming responsibility for the attack, Yarmuk declared in an internet posting that the "doors of Jihad" would close in the region only when Sharia law is established in the KBR, KChR, and Adygeya.<sup>34</sup>

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005 Russian law enforcement organs tracked down and killed amir Atayev and six accomplices, including his Russian wife and one or two of his children in a three-day siege of an apartment complex on the outskirts of Nalchik. Russian Deputy Interior Minister Arkadii Yedelev told journalists that two to four of the seven were female suicide-bombers being prepared to commit acts of terrorism.<sup>35</sup> During the siege a Yarmuk message on *Kavkaz tsentr* declared jihad was "now mandatory for every Muslim in the (North) Caucasus."<sup>36</sup> Yarmuk quickly bounced back from this first setback, announcing it had selected a new amir, Atayev's former naib Rustam Bekanov, and adopted operational plans for the KBR and the entire North Caucasus in 2005, promising to target the children of the MVD and FSB in retaliation for the killing of

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<sup>32</sup> "Napadenie na Upravlenie Narkontrolya KBR sovershila, po versii sledstviya, gruppа 'Yarmuk'," *Izvestiya*, 14 December 2005, [www.izvestia.ru/conflict/article833264](http://www.izvestia.ru/conflict/article833264); Oleg Fochkin and Lina Panchenko, "Rasstrel s dalnym pritselom," *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, 15 December 2004, pp. 1-2; and Timur Samedov, "Vakhkhabity otomstili svoemu tyuremshchiku," *Kommersant Daily*, 9 December 2004, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Zhukov, *Kabardino-Balkariya: Na puti k katastrofe* and Guseinov, "Narkontrol' sdali byvshie sotrudniki." One source claims Astemirov seized 182 pistols of various kinds and 79 assault and sniper's rifles. Gurin, "Authorities Suspect Islamists Murdered Drug Agents in Kabardino-Balkaria," The Jamestown Foundation *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 1, Issue 149, 17 December 2004, [www.jamestownfoundation.org](http://www.jamestownfoundation.org). Another source claimed 36 machine guns, 136 pistols, and a "large quantity of ammunition" for these were stolen. "Napadenie na Upravlenie Narkontrolya KBR sovershila, po versii sledstviya, gruppа 'Yarmuk'." See also RFERL Newline, 15 and 16 December 2004. In a message posted on the Chechen separatist website Daymohk.info on 14 December Yarmuk claimed responsibility for the attack. "Kabardino-Balkarskii Dzhamaat Yarmuk provyol spetsoperatsiyu v Nalchike," *Daymohk.info*, 15 December 2005, <http://www.daymohk.info/cgi-bin/archieve/archieve.cgi?choice=15200412>.

<sup>34</sup> "Yarmuk Declares Jihad," *Chechnya Weekly*, The Jamestown Foundation, Vol. VI, Issue 2, 13 January 2005, <http://www.jamestown.org>.

<sup>35</sup> Some controversy arose as to whether Ataev's daughter was killed and whether he had a son and whether he was killed in the siege. See Tlisova, "Islamist Group Destroyed in Kabardino-Balkariya," Interfax, 27 January cited in RFERL Newline, Vol. 9, No. 18, 28 January 2005; Page, "Rebel attacks spread from Chechnya;" and RFERL Newline, Vol. 9, No. 16, 26 January 2005.

<sup>36</sup> The site also reported that five Russian troops were killed and ten wounded in the first four hours of the siege. "Dzhamaat 'Yarmuk': 'My prinimaem boi!'" *Kavkaz-Tsentr*, 26 January 2005, [www.kavkazcenter.net/russ/content/2005/01/26/29537.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.net/russ/content/2005/01/26/29537.shtml).

Atayev and his family. Bekanov also took the name Seifullah.<sup>37</sup> It is likely that Astemirov became a naib no later than at this time, since he would become Bekanov's successor when he was eliminated by Russian forces in late April.<sup>38</sup>

In March 2005 Mukozhev, identifying himself only as Musa, published a missive on the ChRI separatists' main site *Kavkaz tsentr* echoing Yarmuk's assertion that jihad was now "obligatory" for all Muslims in the KBR and across Russia.<sup>39</sup> This was the same time in which, according to Astemirov's May 2006 open letter, "the leaders" of the JKB were forbidding its members from raising the issue of jihad in the KBR and KChR and from joining the ChRI and the organization began to function more like "an authoritarian sect."<sup>40</sup> Astemirov appeared to be pressuring and settling his old score with Mukozhev for the latter's resistance of his call for a full turn to jihad and the JKB's merger with the ChRI. Thus, up until his March letter on *Kavkaz tsentr*, Mukozhev appears still to have been attempting to contain JKB Muslims' enthusiasm and from their following Astemirov, preferring presumably more preparatory efforts in the KBR. Mukozhev and Nakhushiev would be able to operate openly until early 2005.<sup>41</sup> Thus, police pressure on Astemirov plus Mukozhev's refusal to turn to jihad led Astemirov to fully switch from the JKB to Yarmuk and the ChRI.

Scattered and unclaimed terrorist attacks occurred in the KBR during summer 2005 but there was no announcement of a new Yarmuk leader. The lack of clarity may have been connected also with the flight of Mukozhev and some of his closest associates to the jihad and a resulting difficulty through much of summer in sorting out whether Astemirov or Mukozhev should be Yarmuk's amir. Their previous conflict over whether or not to declare open jihad could have brought a rather tense, perhaps competitive Astemirov-Mukozhev relationship 'to the forest', when the latter joined his former colleague from the JKB in Yarmuk. Also, Basaev and/or the ChRI's new amir/president Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev might have had difficulty in determining who they preferred, given the disarray caused by President Maskhadov's death on 8 March 2005. Most importantly, continuing divisions within the movement between the nationalists and the jihadists created some uncertainty within Yarmuk about whether to join the ChRI movement and also perhaps about whether to join under the Caucasus Front or as a separate front. The summer 2002 Shura had restored a semblance of order, command, and control to the underground insurgency, and the ChRI had gathered momentum since. With Sadulaev's rise to the top of the ChRI in March 2005, the ongoing battle between, on the one hand, its Chechen nationalist wing now led by Akhmed Zakaev, ensconced in

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<sup>37</sup> "Dzhamaat 'Yarmuk': Prinyat plan boevykh operatsii v KBR na 2005 g." and "Dvum boevikam, zaderzhannym v Nalchike, predyavleny obvineniya," 5 May 2005, [www.rian.ru/defense\\_safety/investigations/20050505/39936220.html](http://www.rian.ru/defense_safety/investigations/20050505/39936220.html).

<sup>38</sup> "'Yarmuk' vnov' obezglavlenn", *Izvestiya*, 29 April 2005, [www.izvestia.ru/conflict/article1703491](http://www.izvestia.ru/conflict/article1703491).

<sup>39</sup> See "Dzhikhad dlya musulman Kabardino-Balkarii obyazatelen," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 24 March 2005, 13:59, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2005/03/24/31762.html](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2005/03/24/31762.html).

<sup>40</sup> "Amir Seifullakh: 'Pobeda ot Allakha, tak zhe kak i porazhenie'."

<sup>41</sup> The authorities refrained from charging them with terrorist activity until March 2005 when they had clearly defected to the jihad and gone underground. This might lend some support to Astemirov's claim that the JKB included people who occupied official positions in the KBR. "Amir Seifullakh: 'Pobeda ot Allakha, tak zhe kak i porazhenie'."

London as the ChRI's 'foreign minister', and, on the other hand, the various local Caucasus and foreign jihadists seems to have intensified, with Basaev maneuvering to convene a majlis of some sort to pressure Sadulaev to agree to full jihadization. Although Sadulaev tended to sympathize with the jihadi element, he seemed unable or unwilling to make a full break with the Chechen nationalists who spawned the ChRI.

Astemirov reports in his November 2007 article on how the decision was made to form the CE that in summer 2005 he was present at a "*majlis*" in which not he but Mukozhev along with Basaev and the Ingushetian Ilyas Gorchkhanov resolved the issue of placing the jamaats of Kabardino-Balkaria and Ingushetia under the ChRI's Caucasus Front created by amir/president Sadullaev in May 2005. Aware that the JKB leaders were opposed to the quasi-democratic and nationalist liberation ideology of some ChRI leaders, Basaev told the others that the split in the movement had been overcome and appealed to them to become "citizens of the Islamic State of Ichkeriya and join the military *majlis* of the mujahedin of the Caucasus at which it was being planned to adopt a decision for the full rejection of pagan attributes in the system of the state." Mukozhev, presumably leading Yarmuk and representing other KBR jamaats, agreed on the condition that the decision to adopt Shariah law for Ichkeriya was resolved "soon."<sup>42</sup> Contrary to the view that the jihadization of the ChRI was merely the consequence of foreign actors, the dynamic described by Astemirov suggests there was strong pressure for this coming from below from the radical elements in Yarmuk and some of the other Islamist jamaats in the KBR. Astemirov does not portray himself as having played a major role in the decision taken by the KBR jamaats to join the ChRI and its Caucasus Front as the "Kabardino-Balkaria Sector"; that role was played by Mukozhev. Regardless, Mukozhev met with the JKB amirs, and all agreed to join the ChRI and take the Islamic loyalty oath (bayat) to then ChRI amir/president Sheikh Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev.<sup>43</sup>

Strange as it might seem, Mukozhev may still have been hoping to be able to play a double game of fighting in the jihad and maintaining his public JBK. Because at about this same time, he gave an interview to the Russian news agency 'Regnum' in which he admitted there had been contact between the JKB and Basaev but claimed it had rejected his overtures and the ChRI's cause, saying that his war was not theirs and calling himself a "patriot."<sup>44</sup> However, Mukozhev was about to be placed on Russia's wanted list. On 3 October the Moscow journal *Kommersant-Vlast* published an interview in which a top KBR MVD official reported on the investigation into the JKB and Yarmuk, charging that there were indications that the JKB had received 16 thousand dollars from Basaev during his 2003 visit to the republic and that Mukozhev had authored many of the Yarmuk's internet communiqués.<sup>45</sup> Mukozhev's double game, if he was trying to prolong it, was up.

Ten days later Astemirov led a major raid organized by himself and Basaev of perhaps as many as 200 or more Yarmuk mujahedin and mercenaries in the KBR's capitol, Nalchik, by KBR, ChRI, Ingush, and other mujahedin forces. The final planning

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<sup>42</sup> "Amir Seifulla o protsesse podgotovki k provoglasheniyu Kavkazskogo Emirata."

<sup>43</sup> "Amir Seifullakh: 'Pobeda ot Allakha, tak zhe kak i porazhenie'."

<sup>44</sup> See excerpts from Fatima Tlisova's Regnum interview in Zhukov, *Kabardino-Balkariya: Na puti k katastrofe*.

<sup>45</sup> Alekseyev, "'Est dannye o svyazi dzhamaata s Basaevym'."

for this attack coincided with the JKB's decision to join the ChRI.<sup>46</sup> The mujahedin attacked at least eight points in Nalchik, including the airport, the FSB, MVD, and Narcotics Control Administration headquarters, and School No. 5. Official Russian forces claimed 91 mujahedin were killed, over 40 were captured, and 33 federal troops and 12 civilians were also killed and over 100 were hospitalized with wounds. Basaev claimed 41 mujahedin had been killed and 140 Russian security and military forces had been killed and 160 wounded, while Yarmuk Jamaat claimed "around 40" mujahedin were killed.<sup>47</sup> There were varying reports about the size of the Yarmuk force ranging from less than a hundred to several hundred. Basaev claimed the raid involved 217 mujahedin and that he took part in its planning.<sup>48</sup> More disconcerting for Russian authorities was the claim by some official Russian sources that the majority of the attackers were in their early-to-mid teens and indigenous to the KBR and that an apparently much larger operation was foiled forcing the Basaev's jihadists to move prematurely. Russian MVD chief Nurgaliev claimed that discovery a cache of tons of explosives and weapons in Nalchik by security forces on October 10<sup>th</sup> forced Astemirov to begin the operation earlier than the planned November 4<sup>th</sup> date marking the end of Ramadan.<sup>49</sup> Basaev referred to a leak which tipped off Russian forces.<sup>50</sup> He appeared to be referring to the 8 October arrest by KBR police of a man who claimed he had been asked by a leading Yarmuk member to obtain a map of the Nalchik airport for a terrorist attack he was planning.<sup>51</sup> Regretting ostensibly the deaths of civilians during the Nalchik raid, ChRI Emir/President Sadulaev praised the Nalchik raid and declared: "May Almighty Allah help us liberate and unite the entire Caucasus!"<sup>52</sup> Basaev's ChRI coordinating hub, the KBR's Yarmuk Jamaat, and Dagestan's Shariat Jamaat put out a unified propaganda message around the Nalchik raid that emphasized their jihad is not driven by poverty or bad governance but rather by their fervent Islamic faith and a desire to establish a state based on Shariah law.<sup>53</sup>

Following the Nalchik raid, a warrant was put out for Astemirov's and Mukozhev's arrests, and Nakhushev was summoned to report to security headquarters for

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<sup>46</sup> "Amir Seifullakh: 'Pobeda ot Allakha, tak zhe kak i porazhenie'."

<sup>47</sup> For the Russian authorities' figures, see RFERL Newline, Vol. 9, No. 194, 14 October 2005 and RFERL Newline, Vol. 9, No. 195, 17 October 2005. For the Islamists' figures see "Shamil Basaev: 'Nalchik atakovalo 217 modzhakhedov'" and "Zayavlenie Dzhamaata 'Yarmuk'," *Chechen Press*, 17 October 2005, [www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/17/04.shtml](http://www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/17/04.shtml).

<sup>48</sup> See Basaev's email message "Shamil Basaev: 'Nalchik atakovalo 217 modzhakhedov'," *Chechenpress.org*, 17 October 2005, [www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/17/02.shtml](http://www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/17/02.shtml).

<sup>49</sup> RFERL Newline, Vol. 9, No. 195, 17 October 2005. On the Russians' discovery of the weapons cache see "Huge Explosives Cache Found in Nalchik," *Retwa.org*, 10 October 2005, [www.retwa.org/home.cfm?articleId=1083](http://www.retwa.org/home.cfm?articleId=1083).

<sup>50</sup> "Shamil Basaev: 'Nalchik atakovalo 217 modzhakhedov'."

<sup>51</sup> "Terror Attack at Nalchik Averted," *Retwa.org*, 8 October 2005, [www.retwa.org/home.cfm?articleId=1066](http://www.retwa.org/home.cfm?articleId=1066) citing RIA Novosti.

<sup>52</sup> "Zayavlenie Prezidenta ChRI A.-Kh. Sadulaev," *Chechen Press*, 18 October 2005, [www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/18/01.shtml](http://www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/18/01.shtml).

<sup>53</sup> For Basaev's message see "Shamil Basaev: 'Nalchik atakovalo 217 modzhakhedov'." For Yarmuk's message see "Zayavlenie Dzhamaata 'Yarmuk'." For the message of Dagestan's Shariat Jamaat see "V pamyat' o nashikh dagestanskikh bratyakh-mudzhahedakh," *Chechen Press*, 17 October 2005, [www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/17/16.shtml](http://www.chechenpress.info/events/2005/10/17/16.shtml).

questioning, after which he disappeared. The October 2005 raid was Yarmuk's last appearance on the North Caucasus's jihadi stage but not Astemirov's. Within months, he was identified as the amir of the Kabardino-Balkaria Sector of the Caucasus Front created by ChRI amir/president Sadullaev in May 2005. Mukozhev, according to Astemirov, was appointed "leader of one of the military structures and subordinated to Sheikh Abdul Khalim (Sadulaev)" and convened the JKB's Majlis which approved his and Mukozhev's decisions to unite the JKB with the ChRI and recognize Sadulaev as "their ruler."<sup>54</sup>

As a sign of his supremacy within the KBR wing of the ChRI jihad, Astemirov published the abovementioned May 2006 missive in which he leveled criticism at his former mentor Mukozhev for running the JKB as "an authoritarian sect," resisting the move to open jihad, and limiting the JKB to cooperation with the ChRI during the second war by secretly providing fighters.<sup>55</sup> Four months later, Mukozhev emerged from the underground with a letter posted on the ChRI's main website '*Kavkaz tsentr*' reiterating his earlier call to the KBR's Muslims to their obligation (fard `ain) to carry out jihad, adding a call to carry out the "the line of October 13<sup>th</sup>." He renounced the JKB's previous declared line of combining "peace and Jihad" as an attempt to do the impossible, claiming they had mistakenly thought it was correct to save cadres while preparing them for jihad. Now the JKB had joined the jihad, its amirs had been relieved of their duties, and military amirs had been appointed. He declared "not mosques, but swords" were necessary. He did not mention Astemirov and signed his letter: "Musa Mukozhev, the Caucasus Front."<sup>56</sup> Thus, something of a contest between the two may have survived Yarmuk's transition into the KBR front in the ChRI's jihad.

Regardless, Astemirov would now experience a meteoric rise through the ranks of the ChRI and its successor organization, the Caucasus Emirate (CE), while Mukozhev would change places with him and become one of his former student's four naibs within the new CE's reorganized structure.<sup>57</sup>

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## **ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW NON-PROLIFERATION/TERRORISM STUDIES MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE AND TERRORISM STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

The Monterey Institute for International Studies has recently opted to combine its very popular and highly regarded M.A. International Policy Studies degree specializations in Terrorism Studies and Nonproliferation Studies into a combined new **M.A. Program in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies**, a program that will now have an even higher profile and greater institutional autonomy. Apart from combining two of the Institute's strongest academic programs, this will ensure that students take the

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<sup>54</sup> "Amir Seifullakh: 'Pobeda ot Allakha, tak zhe kak i porazhenie'."

<sup>55</sup> "Amir Seifullakh: 'Pobeda ot Allakha, tak zhe kak i porazhenie'."

<sup>56</sup> "Musa Mukozhev: 'Vyidya na Dzhikhad, my obreli nastoyashchuyu svobodu'."

<sup>57</sup> Imarat Kavkaz. Ob"edinennyi Vilaiet Kabardy, Balkarii i Karachaya," *Islamdin.com*, 31 March 2009, 01:17, [www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=376:1-r&catid=2:kavkaz&Itemid=3](http://www.islamdin.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=376:1-r&catid=2:kavkaz&Itemid=3) and Ob"edinennyi Vilaiyat KBK. 'Osistematzatsii meropriyatii, provodimykh v ramkakh I'dada," *Kavkaz tsentr*, 31 March 2009, 07:28, [www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/03/31/64789.shtml](http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2009/03/31/64789.shtml).

introductory courses in both subjects but will also allow them to concentrate primarily on either terrorism or nonproliferation (or, if they prefer, to focus on both subjects equally, e.g., on CBRN terrorism). As you may already know, our students have an exceptionally high success rate getting jobs in these specialized fields.

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### **ABOUT IIPER**

Islam, Islamism and politics in Eurasia report (IIPER) is a project of the Monterey Terrorism and Research and Education Program (MonTREP) at the Monterey Institute for International Studies (MIIS), Monterey, California. It focuses on all politically-relevant issues involving or bearing on Islam and ethnic Muslim communities in Russia and Eurasia writ large. All issues of IIPER can be found at [www.miis.edu/academics/researchcenters/terrorism/research/Hahn/IIPER](http://www.miis.edu/academics/researchcenters/terrorism/research/Hahn/IIPER).

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IIPER welcomes submissions of 1,500-6,000 words on any aspect of Islamic politics in Eurasia and financial contributions to support the project. For related inquiries or to request to be included on IIPER's mailing list, please contact [gordon.hahn@miis.edu](mailto:gordon.hahn@miis.edu) or [gordon-hahn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gordon-hahn@sbcglobal.net).

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