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## **Probe launched against Natalya Pelevina over illegal income for secret data accessing**



During the investigation into organization, participation and calls for mass riots accompanied by use of violence against representatives of authority that took place on 6 May 2012 in Bolotnaya Square in Moscow, investigators of the Investigative Committee together with operatives of the Ministry of the Interior conducted a search on 10 March in the residence of Natalya Pelevina, the executive secretary of the Independent Human Rights Council and founder and head of American non-commercial organization “Democratic Russia Committee”.

During the investigative operations, including those conducted earlier in Pelevina’s residence the investigators seized documents stating that the American foundation National Endowment for Democracy (NED) was financing the activity of the so-called 6 May Committee aimed to discredit the investigative authorities and the police which investigated the case over mass riots in Bolotnaya Square. They also confiscated some documents that confirmed that the said foundation had allocated in 2013-2014 to Pelevina over 35,000 US dollars; a receipt that the relatives of those convicted of mass riots and who used violence against police forces had received money from Pelevina.

The documents confiscated from Pelevina confirm the version that foreign anti-Russian centers for financing mass riots were involved in attempts to stage color revolution in Russia.

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Additionally, a pen with a built-in camera was confiscated from Pelevina earlier.

All the objects that had been confiscated earlier were subject to forensic inquiries which confirmed that Pelevina's pen was a portable digital video camera and belongs to special technical devices meant for getting video and audio information secretly. As the illegal circulation of such devices is a crime, a criminal case under Article 138.1 of the RF Penal Code (illegal circulation of special technical means meant for secret getting of information) was opened against Pelevina. During that investigation, the investigators also searched Pelevina's residence and confiscated electronic data carriers relevant for the investigation. She is going to be charged soon.

The investigators have reasons to think that Pelevina used the device to catch on camera not only law-enforcement officials for future efforts to discredit them, but the persons from the opposition to use the footage for her own ends. This will also be checked during the probe.

Maybe, the fact that the pen was found, has become the main reason why contrary to the traditional pattern of making a fuss after the investigative operations, Pelevina and her lawyers has done everything to hide the results of the searches from public. Considering all that, I am addressing the people, including her comrades, who have had a chance to speak to Pelevina. Do recall, if during your meetings, Ms. Pelevina had a dark-colored pen, too thick for an ordinary pen. If that was the case, then maybe you were illegally caught on the camera, and the footage may be used against you. In this case we recommend you to report it to the Investigative Committee. We are ready to protect your constitutional right on privacy.

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