

## The Investigative Committee Continues to Identify the Persons Who Took Part in the Attack on the Pskov Paratroopers



The Battle at Hill 776 took place 22 years ago; this is a landmark episode of the second Chechen campaign, during which on February 29 - March 1, 2000, the 6th company of the 2nd battalion of the 104th Guards Parachute Regiment of the 76th Guards Airborne Division (Pskov) under the command of the guard lieutenant colonel M.N. Evtyukhin entered into battle with a detachment of militants far superior in number. This bloody confrontation went down in history as a feat of the Pskov paratroopers, when Russian military personnel showed incredible courage and heroism in an unequal battle during the operation to suppress the terrorist and criminal activities of illegal armed groups. At the cost of their lives, the paratroopers delayed the advance of the militants and bought time for the federal forces to approach.

The crimes committed against Russian servicemen became the subject of a criminal investigation. Investigators of the Main Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian

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Russian Federation for the North Caucasian Federal District have completely restored the picture of what happened. The investigation has established that the united armed gang under the general leadership of Basayev and Khattab included at least 2,000 people. Having taken positions in a mountainous and wooded area near the village of Ulus-Kert, Shatoisky Raion of the Chechen Republic, the gang members fired at the servicemen from various weapons. The attack was carried out from three sides, as a result, 84 servicemen were killed, four were injured of varying severity.

Many years of painstaking work of the investigation made it possible to identify the persons involved in the attack on the paratroopers from among the members of gangs and prove their guilt, clearly demonstrating the principle of the inevitability of punishment.

Investigators established the involvement of 29 persons, of which 19 were convicted of participating in the gang and encroachment on the life of military personnel and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Five persons in the criminal case were put on the wanted list. The criminal prosecution was terminated with regard to two defendants due to their death, as they had been liquidated during armed resistance. Courts are considering criminal cases with regard to three more defendants.

In February of this year, the Main Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for the North Caucasian Federal District completed the investigation of another criminal case against a participant in those distant events that cannot be forgotten. Herman Arbinin, a resident of the Chechen Republic, is accused of committing a crime under Art. 317 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (encroachment on the life of military personnel). The investigation collected a sufficient evidence base, in connection with which the criminal case with the approved indictment was sent to court for consideration on the merits.

With operational support from the FSB of Russia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, investigators of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation continue to identify the participants in the attack, who are hiding from law enforcement agencies. Bringing to justice those responsible for this cruel crime against Russian servicemen has no statute of limitations.

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