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## **In Donetsk, Chairman of the IC of Russia Holds Meeting of Operational Headquarters for Investigation of Crimes Against Civilians and Russian Servicemen in Donbass and Ukraine**



Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation Alexander Ivanovich Bastrykin held a field briefing session of the headquarters for investigation of crimes committed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine and nationalist formations against civilians and Russian servicemen in the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, as well as in Ukraine. The meeting took place in Donetsk. The event was attended by First Deputy Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation Eduard Valerievich Kaburneev, Deputy Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation – Head of the Main Military Investigative Department Konstantin Evgenievich Korpusov, as well as superiors, investigators, and forensic experts of a number of Central Office divisions, including the Main Investigative Department and military investigative authorities of the IC of Russia.

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During the course of the meeting, A. I. Bastrykin was informed about the initial results of the departments investigating the crimes of the Kiev regime against the civilian population of Donbass.

To date, the investigators have information regarding 59 military units and their affiliation to the armed forces branches and places of permanent deployment; four new commanders of the Armed Forces of Ukraine involved in shelling civilians in 2018, 2020, and 2021 have been identified. These are commander of the 25th separate airborne brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine O. V. Zenchenko, commander of the 56th separate motorized infantry brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine I. V. Ivanov, commander of the 79th separate airborne assault brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine A. D. Lutsenko, and commander of the 59th separate motorized infantry brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine G. M. Shapovalov. These persons have been recognized as defendants in absentia.

At the meeting, it was noted that the investigators also had data on involvement of commanders of the nationalist battalion Azov S. O. Velichko and K. V. Nemichev in encroachment on lives of at least eight servicemen by inflicting multiple bodily injuries, including with the use of firearms, on the territory of Kharkov Oblast. Velichko and Nemichev were recognized as defendants (in absentia) in committing a crime under Article 317 of the Russian Criminal Code (encroachment on the life of military personnel), measures have been taken to find and arrest them.

In addition, the involvement of commander of the 19th separate missile brigade of the AFU F. S. Yaroshevich in causing death and injuries of civilians as a result of a precision missile launch from the Tochka-U complex in Voroshilovsky District of Donetsk was established. He was also charged in absentia under Article 356 of the Russian Criminal Code (the use of prohibited means and methods of warfare). A. I. Bastrykin instructed the investigators to document all such facts. In this regard, the head of the department instructed to thoroughly study which units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine had Tochka-U complexes, who gave orders for using them, and to legally evaluate these persons' actions.

The event participants noted that in compliance with the cooperation agreements between the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation and the Prosecutor General's Offices of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, people responsible for interdepartmental interaction were assigned. At present, receiving operational reports on incidents has been established, and based on them, criminal cases on instances of shelling civilian targets are initiated every day. Since this February, the investigators of the IC of Russia have initiated 146 criminal cases on crimes committed by Ukrainian defense authorities. It was noted that over three thousand criminal cases were being processed by the Prosecutor's Office of the DPR. In a number of them, the involvement of commanders of military units of the AFU and senior Ukrainian officials has already been established. In addition, servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and members of nationalist battalions have already been detained within several criminal cases. The Prosecutor's office of the LPR is also investigating more than three thousand episodes of criminal activity. Within the preliminary investigation, specific persons have been identified, and information about them has

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been transferred to the IC of Russia within the framework of interdepartmental interaction in order to bring charges against them later.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the Investigative Committee was informed about the progress of the investigation of the criminal case on the development of biological weapons components in Ukrainian laboratories, including plague and anthrax pathogens. It has been established that since 2007, at the direction of the US Department of Defense, the Threat Reduction Directorate has been acting as a customer and coordinator of joint biological programs with Ukrainian scientists. The investigators obtained documents regarding the implementation of a project to study ways of transmitting bat-borne diseases to humans. The analysis showed that the research aimed to select particularly dangerous pathogens. The collection and analysis of evidence of the development of bioweapon components in laboratories continues jointly with scientists acting as experts within the criminal case.

A. I. Bastrykin heard out the subordinates' report on the investigation of instances of the participation of foreign mercenaries in the armed conflict. To date, the investigators have at their disposal a list of almost 600 mercenaries who arrived in Ukraine from 47 countries. The work is underway to establish their location and circumstances of their participation in the conflict.

During the meeting, A. I. Bastrykin heard out a report on the progress and results of the investigation of the criminal case against members of the Ukrainian nationalist formations Khizanishvili and Antonyuk, who, acting jointly and in concert, followed the orders of the military leadership and committed brutal violent crimes against Russian servicemen in Kiev Oblast, Ukraine. Following the report, the head of the department issued a number of instructions aimed at consolidating the evidence obtained and holding the perpetrators criminally liable.

The department head also studied the details of the investigation of crimes against the civilian population of Mariupol. These include hostage-taking, torture, shelling of humanitarian corridors and use of citizens as a “human shield.”

The Chairman of the IC of Russia gave a number of instructions on the results of the subordinates' report on the investigative actions conducted and scheduled in connection with the investigation of the circumstances of the Ukrainian special services' provocation with the alleged “murder” of Bucha residents.

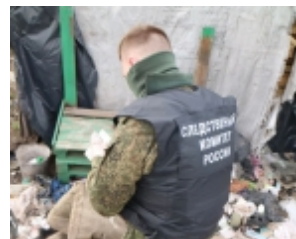
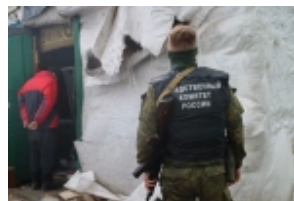
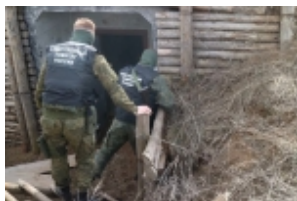
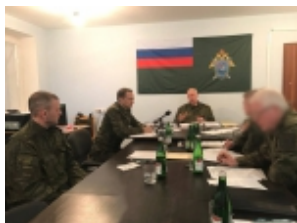
The Chairman of the Investigative Committee paid special attention to the issues of conducting investigative actions with prisoners of war from the AFU and national formations, noting the need to establish the nature of the actions they committed during the special military operation and previous events.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the IC of Russia was informed about the initial investigative actions within criminal cases initiated by military investigative authorities. The department head

instructed superiors of the military investigative authorities of the IC of Russia to ensure the permanent deployment of investigators in Donbass in order to immediately carry out urgent investigative actions and increase the efficiency of work on identifying persons involved in the war crimes.

After hearing out the subordinates' reports, the Chairman of the IC of Russia stressed that it was necessary to continue interrogating witnesses of the events, thus obtaining important proof. The head of the department also noted that it was of primary importance to hold the commanders accountable, since it was the commanders who gave illegal orders. A. I. Bastrykin stressed that “bearing in mind the prospects of a military tribunal, it is necessary to accumulate the baggage which the investigators will bring there.” Despite the committed crimes are obvious, they must be competently documented in order for the court to evaluate the evidence objectively. With this in mind, the head of the department decided to increase the number of employees of specialized Investigative Committee departments, including forensic experts, involved in recording the evidence.

## Изображения



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