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## **A Criminal Case Has Been Initiated Against a Ukrainian Artillery Officer Who Gave Orders to Shell Civilian Objects**



The Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation has initiated a criminal case against Lieutenant Roman Panchenko, the commander of the battery of the 115th separate mechanized brigade of the reserve of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (military unit A-4053). He is accused of committing a crime under Part 1, Article 356 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (ill-treatment of the civilian population, the use of prohibited means and methods in an armed conflict).

It has been established that in May 2022, in violation of the requirements of the Convention for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Geneva, 12.08.1949) and its Additional Protocols, which prohibit taking measures that could lead to the destruction of civilians who do not military operations, Panchenko repeatedly gave orders to his subordinate military personnel to carry out artillery shelling with armor-piercing sub-caliber, high-explosive fragmentation, as well as cumulative rounds of residential buildings and public places (hotels, shops, recreation areas) in the city of Severodonetsk, the Lugansk People's Republic, as well as nearby settlements. All attacks were carried out with the obligatory use of a fire spotter.

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These actions resulted in the destruction of residential buildings and infrastructure facilities, including a hotel, a city sports complex, a kindergarten, a healthcare institution, as well as households of individuals located on Lisichanskaya and Donetskaya streets in the city of Severodonetsk. The damage to these properties was not due to military necessity.

During the interrogation, Panchenko has said that he was aware of the fact that more than two thousand civilians were in the city of Severodonetsk. Considering that the shelling was carried out from a closed position and at a great distance, he admitted that people who did not take part in hostilities and armed conflict could have suffered as a result of the shelling carried out by his subordinates.

Witnesses have been identified, and investigative actions will begin with them in the near future.

The preliminary investigation of the criminal case is ongoing.

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