
The Chairman of the Investigative Committee of Russia gave an interview to "Rossiiskaya Gazeta"



The Head of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation explained what the Ukrainian nationalists will be charged for

What is the progress in the investigation of the crimes against civilians committed by Ukrainian nationalists? Has the damage caused to the civilian population by the Ukrainian nationalists been estimated? What results did the continued investigation of the crimes committed by the corrupted ex-officials yield? Mr. Alexander Bastrykin - Head of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, spoke in his interview to the Rossiyskaya Gazeta about the questions raised above and many other problems.

Alexander Ivanovich, not so long ago, there was a lot of talk among journalists and civilians about the crimes committed by the military staff of the Azov nationalist battalion, banned in Russia, and people spoke their cruelty. The investigation is carried out by the Investigative Committee. Have these stories been confirmed by criminal case files?

Alexander Bastrykin: Investigators established that the above mentioned troop consists of people of different age groups, levels of education and life experience. But they are all united by their unwavering willingness to kill innocent people. This is the main phenomenon of the Azov nationalism.

I will give a few examples to understand what I mean. In early March, in Mariupol, one of the Azov members Mr. Sergei Mikhailenko and his fellow-officer with the call-sign "Drone", were located near one of the residential buildings. They noticed a car equipped with a signal board "Children" written in large letters that was moving in their direction.

Despite this, they shot at the car, killing four family members including a three-year-old child that were inside.

Here's another example for you. Mr. Aleksey Mozgovoy and his brother Yury held their positions in a five-story building in Mariupol. There were 15 civilians in the basement, including a man suffering from a serious illness. The nationalist brothers forbade their captured civilians to leave the basement, threatening to kill them, it was forbidden to leave the basement even for the purpose of bringing medicine to the sick man. As a result, the man died. And when the civilians, seeing what had happened, wanted to leave the basement, the Mozgovoy brothers began to shoot at them - four more people died. And, unfortunately, we have quite enough of similar examples.

Your Committee performs extremely complex and important tasks, but there are priorities among them. In your opinion as you are the Chief Investigator of the Country, which criminal cases are the cases of the highest priority for the Investigative Committee now?

Alexander Bastrykin: The focus of our attention is the investigation of serious crimes against the citizens and the interests of the State.

The investigating authorities continue their extensive work to restore the social, economic and civil rights of people, continue to work to fight corruption and economic crimes, work to protect the rights of juveniles, work to counter extremism and terrorism, work to improve criminal and criminal procedure legislation in order to ensure the inevitability of punishment for committed crimes.

During the investigation this year, the crime victims were compensated about 194 billion rubles.

This number is three times higher than the last year figure. We confiscated the property of criminals in the amount of more than 72 billion rubles, where 45 billion related to corruption crimes.

In recent years, the crime solvency rate of such crimes as murder, rape, assault causing grievous bodily harm resulted the death of the victim, is kept at the level of 95-99 percent. These results testify the high-quality and well-coordinated work of all officers of our law enforcement agencies. At the same time, the Committee is currently paying special attention to investigating the crimes of Ukrainian military forces against civilians in Donbas, as well as protecting the rights of victims in these cases and providing assistance to refugees.

Our media reports daily about the civilian infrastructure being destroyed and about victims being regularly shot at by the Ukrainian nationalists. You must have the most accurate information about it.

Alexander Bastrykin: It is critically important to continue telling the world objectively about the events of the recent months. The use of force by the Ukrainian nationalists cannot be justified in any way. They are intensively shelling the Donetsk and the Lugansk People's Republics, brutally and unprincipled strike at civilians, civilian objects, including children's institutions. And they do it not only in the LPR and DPR, but also on their own territories in order to blame the Russian military for this. They don't care about people. The nationalists destroyed and partially damaged more than 7,000 civilian infrastructure facilities, including residential buildings, schools, kindergartens and transport. Over the entire period of the investigation, more than 216 thousand people were interrogated; more than 91 thousand were recognized as victims, including 14,072 juveniles.

Cases against Generals

How many cases like these are investigated and whom your subordinates file as "suspected and accused"?

Alexander Bastrykin: Criminal cases in Ukraine are being investigated against the representatives of the military and political leaders of the country, members of radical nationalist groups and representatives of Ukrainian armed units. In total, more than 1,300 criminal cases have been launched, whereas more than 400 persons are arraigned. During the preliminary investigation, more than 220 persons, including representatives of the senior commanding staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, including commanders of military units that shelled the civilians, have already been recognized as criminals against the peace and security of mankind, such crimes do not have a period of limitations. A total of 92 commanders and their subordinates have been charged. 96 people are put on the wanted list, in particular 51 commanders of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

It seems that there are only politicians and nationalists of various levels among the defendants in the cases, aren't they?

Alexander Bastrykin: No. Criminal cases have been launched on the offenses of the weapons of mass destruction development by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine Officials. We still have cases of the participation of mercenaries in the commission of crimes on the territory of Ukraine. They are

being investigated against the citizens of Great Britain, the United States, Canada, the Netherlands and Georgia. Five more criminal cases have been launched on the attacks on the lives of Russian servicemen committed by representatives of Ukrainian nationalist groups, as well as six criminal cases on the grounds of tortures of Russian servicemen. In addition, eight criminal cases have been launched on attacks on Russian embassies and diplomatic representatives in the Netherlands, Ireland, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and on the "Rossotrudnichestvo" building in France. A criminal case has also been launched on the fact of the capture and detention of four employees of the Rosatom state corporation on the territory of Ukraine.

You have already told our readers that the specialists of the Investigative Committee are assessing the damage caused by the Ukrainian nationalists to the city of Mariupol. What is the complexity of this process and how is it carried out?

Alexander Bastrykin: Several teams were sent to Donbas: these are investigators, and Officers of the Main Directorate of the Forensic Expert Center (FEC) of the Investigative Committee. Forensic experts inspect all civilian infrastructures, including public utilities, and document everything using technical means. Then, within the investigation in order to identify the damage from the USF actions, multi-stage forensic appraisal - construction and technical examinations are appointed and conducted. At the same time, our expert institution promptly developed individual methodological approaches for the production of these examinations. The complexity of this process is that we are in conditions of limited original data for each destroyed capital construction object, and we need to estimate its characteristics and cost before the moment of destruction, as well as how much the reconstruction will cost us in the current conditions. Officers of the department examine all retrospective technical documents, they are often in draft format, I mean data from protocols for inspections of the scenes of incidents of destroyed buildings, they study the current regulatory framework in subjective to indexation, conversion and pricing in construction. We also conduct complex forensic and forensic ballistic examinations to establish the infliction of death on civilians committed by the armed formations of Ukraine. More than 850 examinations have already been finalized. There is still a lot to be done, and all the data obtained should become evidence in future trials against representatives of the Kiev regime involved in the death of civilians and the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

Investigators of the Investigative Committee in Donbass are counting the damage caused by the Armed Forces of Ukraine to civilians and civilian objects. Photo: Press Service of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation

To stand trial before the International Tribunal

Investigating the crimes of the Ukrainian security forces on the territories of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, your Committee repeatedly draws our attention to the large-scale violations of international law, war crimes against the peace and security of mankind that have been happening there. How will the criminals be prosecuted for these crimes? Will

they be subject to the auspices of the United Nations?

Alexander Bastrykin: Considering the position of the "collective West", which openly sponsors Ukrainian nationalism and supports the Kiev regime, the building of such tribunal under the auspices of the UN in the current perspective is extremely doubtful. It would be more appropriate to work on this issue with Russian partners like the CIS, the CSTO, BRICS, and the SCO. The adoption of the court and its charter could be formalized by an agreement between Russia, the member countries of the organizations, and the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics. At the same time, it is also advisable to involve other countries who demonstrate an independent position on the Ukrainian issue based on the norms of international law, for example Syria, Iran and Bolivia, in the work on the formation of an international body of justice. The creation of an international judicial body would demonstrate to the entire world community the inevitability of punishment for crimes against the peace and security of mankind, the determination of Russia and the true partners of our country in the eradication of Nazism, nationalism and xenophobia.

For the Investigative Committee the thing of the major importance is the work of the investigation. But you are not limited to this, I know you are also involved in humanitarian affairs. Do you think this work is no less important?

Alexander Bastrykin: Undoubtedly. This applies to both: assistance to the residents of Donbas and to the refugees. Our divisions organize the delivery of humanitarian cargo for the residents of the republics. We collect funds for the purchase of essential goods. These are various medicines and goods for children, which are sent to medical institutions in the DPR and LPR. Mobile messings were organized on the territory of Mariupol, which helped to provide food for several thousand residents, various entertainment events were held for children. Sometimes, people were assisted in evacuation. For example, on my instructions from the city of Novodruzhesk, our officers organized the evacuation of an 86-year-old lady, who could not leave her house on her own to travel to Lugansk, where she met with her family. There are other similar stories. On the territory of Russia in all regions, the work of our territorial investigative bodies is organized, aimed at helping refugees. We are monitoring the situation around the clock. In three months, more than 5,000 refugees contacted the hotline of the Investigative Committee. People have a variety of problems, we help to overcome them. Assistance is provided in resolving issues related to the provision of vital medicines, the search for missing relatives, employment, sending children to preschool institutions, the provision of social housing, rehabilitation, paperwork, the status of a low-income family, accelerating the receipt of payments due to citizens who were forced to leave their place of residence receiving humanitarian and medical assistance, hospitalization, as well as other assistance. There are a number of cadet corps and two departmental academies in the Investigative Committee, where we also accepted children from Donbas for training.

Highway inspectors

Apart of crimes in Donbas, the Investigative Committee does not leave its internal work. Tell

us please more about the case connected with the Pyatigorsk police.

Alexander Bastrykin: Yes, we do have such a thing. In cooperation with our colleagues from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the FSB of Russia, we continue to work on the decriminalization of the North Caucasus region. At the beginning of the month, we detained 14 members of a criminal group acting in Stavropolskiy krai. This group included 11 traffic police officers and civilians. It was established that last year the commander of the unit, Mr. Nikolai Dmitrienko, organized a criminal group for the systematic extortion of bribes, including his subordinates. Police officers threatened the car drivers with falsification of evidence and criminal prosecution for drug trafficking, forcing them to pay bribes. After the criminals were detained, we conducted searches at dozens of people involved in this. They were imposed pre-trial restraint as custody. This, unfortunately, is not the first criminal group of such type in the North Caucasus. Earlier we already talked about other officials involved in extortion on the roads. This area is obviously very much corrupted, and together with our partners-officers we will continue to struggle with this phenomenon.

The cases that are finalized

Our followers will be interested to know which of the latest criminal cases could you call socially significant and provide some statistics on cases.

Alexander Bastrykin: This year, 38,393 criminal cases were submitted to courts, including more than 17,000 cases of crimes against the person, 4,294 cases of corruption, 1,324 of crimes of past years, 5,196 of crimes against juveniles. Also we investigated 6244 crimes committed in the field of IT or by means of using the information and telecommunication technologies. We have finalized the case where the top management of big commercial organizations and the officials of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Russia were charged. They are accused of fraudulently embezzling budget funds in the amount of 483 million rubles in 2013-2017 by the execution the terms of a state contract for the implementation of a Federal targeted program being provided for the development of the pharmaceutical and medical industries. The case of the beneficiary of Rinvestbank Mr. Vladimir Romanov, the president of the bank Mss. Svetlana Pozdnova and the chairman of the board of the bank Mr. Maxim Tkachev have been finalized. In 2015-2016, through the issuance of knowingly bad loans to controlled legal entities, they stole the funds of a credit institution - in the amount of 1.363 billion rubles. Mr. Sergei Kelbakh, chairman of the board of the Russian Highways state company, stood his trial, being accused of abuse of power in the implementation of the Federal targeted program for the construction of the Central Ring Road. His case has been submitted to court. Also I can give you an example of the case about the theft of more than 1.6 billion rubles allocated for the implementation of State contracts concluded between the Russian Ministry of Defense with OJSC Voentelekom. Four defendants who entered the plea bargains, Mr. Semiletov, Mr. Savitsky and Mss. Davydova - were prosecuted. The Main Directorate has finalized the investigation against Mr. Roman Emashev, Mr. Kirill Anisimov and Mr. Valentin Chernyshev, who sold babies to foreign citizens under the guise of surrogate motherhood. They, as the investigation believes, are involved in the sale of 22 newborns.

Speaking about the children's rights protection, I cannot but note that the law enforcement agencies has stopped one of the criminal group activity who organized prostitution in Moscow, St. Petersburg and abroad, including the use of juveniles. It was very active in 2018-2020. A number of defendants, including Ms. Victoria Morozova, Mr. Dmitry Proshkin and Ms. Ekaterina Dorofeeva stood their trials. As you know, I am very demanding towards my subordinates in terms of protecting the housing rights of orphan kids. The Committee has finalized the investigation on charges of negligence of the Minister of Property Relations in Omskaya Oblast Mr. Yevgeny Kozlov. His actions resulted to the violation of the children's rights of more than 70 orphans and they were not provided housing. Nevertheless, one positive thing, I would like to note is the adoption of a law by the State Duma that established the possibility of registration at the place of residence at the addresses of municipalities of orphans who have reached the age of 18, until they are provided with the housing required by law. Such a mechanism will allow them to exercise their social rights. Until recently, this initiative has been working out by the directly engaged departments at the Investigative Committee platform as part of the activity of the interdepartmental group, and a corresponding bill was prepared. However, the deputies managed to implement such an approach more smoothly and in a short time, so the orphans can be grateful to them.

Who is above the law?

Foreign countries stopped helping us. Our General Prosecutor's Office stated that with the start of the special operation, even murderers and pedophiles are refused to be extradited from abroad under the pretext that their case is of "political" matter. And how then is it possible to return the money stolen from the country by the defendants in criminal cases?

Alexander Bastrykin: One of the most important priorities of law enforcement activity is the search, arrest and seizure of proceeds and property obtained by criminal means, taken abroad. Large amounts of funds are being transferred abroad, and the ways to withdraw them, considering the hyper-intensive growth of digital technologies, are becoming increasingly difficult. The current situation, when cooperation with individual countries is not easy, it is a complicated issue of the return of such assets. In this regard, the Investigative Committee of Russia initiated the procedure of developing a mechanism for continuing the investigation of persons in respect of monetary assets, against which criminal cases were submitted to court, in order to empower the investigating authorities and operational units with the full scope of procedural powers, for building constructive interaction with the competent authorities foreign states.

You have always paid great attention to the training of young personnel and patriotic education. Have your priorities changed now?

Alexander Bastrykin: Now this task has become even more important. I repeatedly keep say that nowadays there is a struggle for the minds of people. The information space is used by various forces in order to influence young people. There are many resources on the Internet created from abroad and containing harmful information. In this regard, we are talking about the great value of

educational work with young people, where not only parents and teachers, but also public institutions should be involved too. In our department, we have understood the importance of this task long time ago, so the learning process in the educational institutions of the Investigative Committee is structured accordingly. Cadets and students do not just get theoretical knowledge. Many things were for the students participation in public life, patriotic actions, studying history, meeting with veterans, helping people.

In my opinion, schoolchildren and students used to have a wonderful tradition - a working semester. And now the department has organized the rotation shifts of the labor detachment consisted of the St. Petersburg Cadet Corps in a military clinical hospital. Cadets help servicemen who were injured during a special operation and are being treated in hospitals. They accompany them around the territory, provide all possible physical assistance and moral support. Now they do understand already that their help allows the staff to free more time to other patients who need attention and care too. For children, such communication is also helpfull, as it is a valuable life experience. The hospital staff also introduces them to the basis of first aid, procedures to preserve and promote health. All this is extremely relevant and important for the formation of the personality of future graduates. We educate them in terms of human values, we strengthen them spirituality in our traditional sense.

Alexander Ivanovich, our conversation is happening on the eve of the professional holiday of investigators. The staff of Rossiyskaya Gazeta congratulates you and all officers of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation on the Day of an the investigative Officer of the Russian Federation. We wish everyone good health and good luck!

Focal question

Today, in the context of the clearly Russophobic policy of individual countries, it can almost be assumed a possiblility of all sorts of obstacles to protecting the interests of Russia and its citizens from all kinds of criminal encroachments outside our state, as I can say.

Alexander Bastrykin: As we can see, the Russophobic policy of Western countries can also influence our cooperation at various criminal cases. There were many cases when Russian citizens became victims of crimes in other countries.

We tried to achieve justice, but local justice was often very loyal to the citizens of their country, passing rather lenient sentences or ignoring some important circumstances.

As you know, our legislation provides for the possibility of criminal prosecution of foreign citizens if the State, where the crime was committed, does not investigate the relevant criminal case and does not pass a sentence.

Considering the current situation, there is a need to optimize these conditions.

It would be expedient to consolidate the possibility for Russian investigators to launch criminal cases when a crime is committed outside the Russian Federation that affects the interests of our state or a citizen, regardless of the results of the criminal prosecution of a person or the decision of a court in a foreign jurisdiction.

All mentioned above will ensure the effective protection of the Russian Federation interests and interests of our citizens from assaults coming from outside the State.

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