The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Conscript 'Slave' Charged

October 31, 2011



A conscript who said he was held in slavery in Dagestan for 11 years has been charged with desertion, a spokeswoman for the Soldiers' Mothers Union rights group said Monday, Interfax reported.

Andrei Popov went missing in Saratov region in 2000 but reappeared in August, claiming he was held at several brick factories in Dagestan, where he was beaten and forced to work until he eventually escaped.

Directors of two brick factories implicated by Popov denied allegations. No cases against them were reported.

Neither police nor the military had commented on the matter Monday.

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Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/10/31/conscript-slave-charged-a10510