

Dinosaur Eggs Found in Chechnya

April 17, 2012

The  Moscow Times

GROZNY, Chechnya — Geologists in Chechnya have discovered what they believe to be fossilized dinosaur eggs laid by one of the huge extinct reptiles that roamed the Earth more than 60 million years ago.

"We've found about 40 eggs so far, the exact number has not been established," said Said-Emin Dzhabrailov, a geologist at the Chechen State University. "There could be many more laying under the ground."

The find was uncovered when a construction crew was blasting through a hillside to build a road near the region's border with Georgia.

A team of geologists coincidentally stumbled across the smooth, oval rock-like forms, which range from 25 centimeters to 1 meter on a recent trip to the area, Dzhabrailov said.

He said paleontologists were needed to determine which species of dinosaur had laid them.

Dzhabrailov said the regional Chechen government, which is eager to shed the region's reputation for violence, is considering turning the area into a nature preserve and seeking

to attract tourists.

Federal forces fought two separatist wars between 1994 and 2001 in Chechnya, and an Islamist insurgency persists in the region and surrounding provinces.

However, violence has declined under the strong-arm rule of Ramzan Kadyrov, whose multimillion-dollar construction projects are aimed at raising the region's profile and boosting the tourism potential of the troubled area.

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