The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Investigators Say FSB Officers 'On Strike' Are Made Up Characters

By The Moscow Times

March 25, 2013



The officers of the Federal Security Service's main directorate featured in a controversial Novaya Gazeta report this week for their protest against the release of Chechen policemen accused of kidnapping are "fictional characters," the Investigative Committee said.

Vladimir Markin, the committee's official spokesman, said on Monday that the FSB was never involved in the criminal case involving policemen — who were accused of kidnapping and torturing a man in Moscow — and that the whole investigation was conducted by police in strict adherence with the law.

The case involves several Chechen police officers from Kadyrov's protective unit accused of kidnapping, extortion and torture who were released under pledge not to leave town in mid-March.

In August 2011, the suspects allegedly kidnapped a man in Moscow, took him to a private

house in the Moscow region and beat him for several days, demanding money.

The man was later dumped onto a sideroad, but he survived and went to the police. Eleven Chechens were later detained over the incident and some of them were believed to be personal bodyguards to Kadyrov.

On March 25, 2013 Novaya Gazeta published an article about the men's early release, with FSB officers who spoke on condition of anonymity declaring a strike over the release.

In the Investigative Committee's official statement, however, Markin said the suspects were released simply because the investigation was over, suggesting there was no behind-the-scenes manipulation to get them out early.

"Their nationality doesn't matter to the investigation. What matters is that they are police officers who committed illegal acts," Markin said. "Their nationality has been neither a mitigating nor an aggravating factor."

One mitigating factor Markin does hint at, however, involves the victim of the kidnapping case. Citing an article from the Criminal Code that deems "unlawfulness or immorality by the victim" a mitigating circumstance in sentencing, Markin notes that the Georgian man who was beaten had a criminal record that included stealing cars and had spent many years in prison for other crimes.

"To some extent this influenced the decision to change the measure of detention on the accused," Markin said.

Due to an editing error, an earlier version of this article stated that Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin issued his statement on Tuesday. It should have said Monday.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/03/25/investigators-say-fsb-officers-on-strike-are-made-up-characters-a22681