

Weekly Bulletin

Issue 3, 20 July 2005, review 11 - 18 July 2005

The Bulletin is published by the FTI/IFES Early Warning for Violence Prevention Project.

The information in this bulletin is intended for use by individuals and organizations willing to make a peaceful intervention in a particular conflict situation. The Early Warning Center strives to provide accurate information while disseminating information timely to make prevention and early intervention possible. A variety of sources are used, including eyewitnesses, mass media, civil society representatives, officials and other knowledgeable people.

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1. Alerts

This week there are no alerts.

2. Weekly review

- On July 13, the leader of Party "Erkindik", Topchubek Turgunaliyev announced his intention to start the collection of signatures in support of the proposal on dissolution of the Kyrgyz parliament. In an interview for "Azattyk" radio, the party leader explained that the present parliament "is not a real expression of people's aspirations", as it "was formed by the previous regime" (www.pr.kg 13.07.2005). The National Revival Party "Asaba" also supports this initiative.
- On July 14, the Central Election Commission acknowledged the Presidential election. The elected President is Bakiev Kurmanbek Salievich. On July 16 the Constitutional Court of the Kyrgyz Republic stated the legality of the results of the pre-term election of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- On July 14, people related to businessman Alkanov, owner of the market "Alkanov & Co", undertook an unsuccessful effort to remove builders, who occupied the territory adjacent to automarket "Dordoï" about 3 months ago. According to the land occupants, Alkanov's people started to destroy the walls of their houses with special techniques, but the arrival of mass-media representatives has prevented further destruction (www.pr.kg/lenta 15/07/2005).
- A special expert group was created by the State Commission under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, that will analyze the activities of the religious party "Hizbut-Tahrir", prohibited in the Kyrgyz Republic. This step was undertaken following the recent increase in the activities of this party on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic. Earlier, on July 12, the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tursunbai Bakir uulu, announced that he considers the activities of the religious Party "Hizbut-Tahrir" not dangerous for society.
- On July 14 Mailuusuu electric-lamp factory, bought by a Russian company two years ago through tender, sent its staff on unpaid holiday. The management of the factory declared that they also are unable to pay employees' salaries for the past three months because of poor sales. According to

the management, the factory's products can't compete with cheaper Chinese products. The employees express their dissatisfaction with the situation.

3. Trends and expectations

The week from July 11 till July 17 was relatively calm. The election results did not evoke immediate protests by any civil or political group, although some observers and candidates had doubts on the validity of the election process in certain areas. The situation in the Kyrgyz Republic is generally calm and stable after the elections.

- Actions of the population aimed at getting **compensation for damages** suffered during the last 10 years, begin to bear fruit. According to the lawyer Jaychubekov Sartbay, the court trial on civil suit by the people that suffered from the Aksy events in 2002 came to an end on July 14. The Aksy regional court made the decision to pay about 5.810.000 soms to the victims of the Aksy events. The maximum sum of compensation is one million soms, whereas the money paid to other plaintiffs varies from 50.000 to 400.000 soms.

Also the inhabitants of Jety-Oguz rayon of Issyk-Kul Oblast are undertaking efforts to obtain compensation from the new government. About 200 inhabitants of 5 villages (Barskoon, Tosor, Tamga, Chon Jargylchak and Kichi Jargylchak) organized a peaceful meeting where they announced their **demands to the government and to Kumtor Operating Company**. Among their demands are the following: to set up a Committee on investigation of damage and examination of the ecological safety with the participation of the local inhabitants; compensation "in compliance with international standards" for damages to the inhabitants who suffered from the accident, and dismissal of corrupt officials. Turdukeev Z, head of the rayon administration, attended the meeting. As stated by Erkingul Imankojoeva, one of the organizers of the action and leader of the NGO "Karek", they will again block the road to the Kumtor mine, if their demands will not be met by July 25. (www.pr.kg 18.07.2005).

In the summer of 1998 there was an accident with a lorry of the "Kumtor Gold Company". As a result, about 1762 kg of cyanide natrium fell into the Barskoon River and reached Issyk-Kul Lake. By information of radio "Azattyk", 343 people died in Jety-Oguz region as a result of poisoning and many people became disabled. Reportedly reproductive health of women has worsened in the region. In addition, the local population suffered economic loss because of lost harvest and decreased sales. Assessments concerning the real scale of the damage vary. For example, the investigation by the National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (Netherlands), carried out on request of the World Health Organization, states that the concentration of cyanide in the soil did not exceed 1 mg/kg one week after the accident. This amount does not present any threat for life and health of the local population and animals.

According to Tolekan Ismailova, Director of the NGO "Civil Society against Corruption", local people are concerned that, if Kumtor Operating Company does not observe certain security norms, there is a likelihood that the Ferghana Valley will be poisoned with cyanide waste via Naryn river.

- The redistribution of spheres of influence and general **criminalization** of the situation in the country, related to an increase of the activities of criminal groups, continues. Dissatisfied owners of exchange offices together with their relatives and friends came to the Major's Office in Jalal-Abad on July 15. They stated that they were subjected to pressure by a criminal group that presented itself as representatives of well-known Rysbek Akmatbaev. According to these businessmen, the previous day about 15:30, 12 "soldiers", who said they came "from Rysbek", visited the exchange office owners and requested businessmen to make a monthly payment "for protection". According to the people gathered, the same thugs have visited butchers with similar demands. The

unexpected appearance of Rysbek's people in southern Kyrgyzstan causes perplexity among locals. Many people are convinced that actions of these "soldiers" have a provocative nature and are aimed at discrediting Rysbek's efforts to vindicate himself in the eyes of the public. The businessmen demanded the city administration to take firm actions and threatened that, in case of refusal, they would resolve this problem on their own. Businessmen have also noted that Jalal-Abad exchange office owners are mainly Uzbeks, but "soldiers" were Kyrgyzs, and that this conflict may lead to serious interethnic discord. Deputy Head of City Department of Internal Affairs Mr. Mamytov has promised to undertake prompt measures to halt the actions of "Rysbek's soldiers".

An event that occurred in Osh oblast on July 18, 2005 caused concern. During the pursuit of a car without identification number, policemen were attacked. The people they were pursuing threw two grenades to the police car (www.pr.kg/lenta 18.07.2005). Along with recent events at "Alai" Hotel, this incident indicates that a certain part of the population in Osh oblast has access to heavy weapons.

- The situation regarding **land seizures** remains without resolution. Events, unrelated to each other, continue to take place. A dispute between land occupants and the owner of "Alkanov and Co" market about land adjacent to the automarket "Dordoï" continues. About 3 months ago several dozens of families from the neighboring microdistrict have without permission divided this area into land plots and started to build their houses. According to the land occupants, Alkanov's people attempted to remove them from this area on July 14 by destroying their temporary settlements. According to Deputy Director General of "Alkanov and Co" Ltd, Mrs. B.Arpachieva, on July 12 Sverdlov rayon administration of Bishkek-city has issued an order to free the territory owned by "Alkanov and Co" within three days. According to her "Alkanov and Co" plans to construct a livestock market nearby, and will build a road to the market as well as a sanitary zone on the occupied land. A representative of the land occupants, Bakyt Baibekova, says that Alkanov has no right to use this land. She has also denied information present in the mass-media that land occupants have destroyed a tractor located on the occupied area. Both sides agreed to resolve this problem together with deputies of the City Parliament.

In the previous week representatives of Oktyabrsky rayon administration of Bishkek-city have also tried to convince land occupants to leave the territories occupied in Tunguch microdistrict. This attempt failed to succeed. According to representatives of land occupants, the Coordination Committee plans to organize a meeting with the leadership of Lenin rayon administration on 18-19 July. At the moment everyone awaits a decision of the Government.

4. Announcements

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Prevention Database: The Early Warning for Violence Prevention Project appeals to organizations and individuals interested in organizing conflict mitigation activities to register in the Project database. The database will allow us to promptly engage you in the development and implementation of violence prevention measures.

Crisis Emergency Fund: The Early Warning for Violence Prevention Project is also announcing a small grant program intended for implementation conflict and violence prevention measures.

For more information about the Database and Emergency Fund please contact Violetta Yan at: 264/27 Manaschi Sagynbaya, phone: 996 (312) 64-43-60, 64-46-58, fax: 996 (312) 64-44-63, e-mail: fti@infotel.kg

About the Project:

The Early Warning for Violence Prevention Project was initiated to prevent violence related to political conflicts by creating a mechanism of forecasting/investigating conflicts and implementing appropriate preventive measures. The project is initiated by the Foundation for Tolerance International and the International Foundation IFES and supported by OSCE, UNDP, and the Swiss and US governments.

In order to closely monitor the situation in the country, the Project created a national network of monitors selected among active members of the civil society and representatives of academic circles, media and law enforcement agencies. Overall, 36 monitors observe the situation throughout the country and maintain permanent communication with the Center for Early Warning.

The Center for Early Warning processes the information collected, prepares recommendations on interventions needed for violence prevention, and publishes a Weekly Bulletin.

The Early Intervention Component develops and implements action plans aimed at prevention of violence in close collaboration with governmental bodies, NGOs and international organizations. The Project also offers small grants for implementation of violence prevention measures.