

Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed by Ukrainian Combatants in the Village of Kazachya Loknya during 06.08.2024-10.03.2025

PUBLIC INVESTIGATION

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ABBREVIATIONS

UCAV - unmanned combat air vehicle

UAF - Ukrainian Armed Forces

DPR - Donetsk People's Republic

LPR - Luhansk People's Republic

IHL - international humanitarian law

UAF - Ukrainian Armed Formations

PREAMBLE

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation launched a special military operation in the territory of Ukraine, stating that its goal was to protect the population of Donbass, which, according to Russian President Vladimir Putin, had been subjected to genocide by the Kyiv regime for eight years.

This step became the culmination of a years-long confrontation, the roots of which lie in the events of 2014, when the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DPR and LNR) broke away and were not recognized by the Ukrainian authorities.

By the end of 2023, the front line mostly ran through the territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, and the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions¹. However, in February 2024, the situation changed dramatically: control over the strategically important town of Avdeyevka passed to Russian troops, allowing the Russian Federation to take the initiative into its own hands. Throughout 2024, the Armed Forces of Ukraine (UAF) suffered significant losses, retreating from one settlement after another². The only exception was the UAF's Kursk operation, which, however, failed to change the overall dynamics of events.³

On August 6, 2024, the UAF launched a full-scale ground invasion in the Kursk region, having crossed the Russian-Ukrainian border⁴. In the course of this operation, Ukrainian troops occupied dozens of settlements, including the town of Sudzha, establishing control over an area of about 1,000 km² by mid-August.⁵ The village of Kazachya Loknya was among the captured settlements, which became one of the epicenters of the tragic events.

¹ Maps of hostilities on December 31 (published on 01.01.2024) Readovka Media. URL: <https://readovka.news/news/176013> (accessed on 14.03.2025)

² Chronology of the Special Military Operation. Internet Encyclopedia – Runiversalis. URL: https://руни.рф/Хронология_специальной_военной_операции (accessed on 14.03.2025)

³ Kursk offensive (2024–present). «Wikipedia» The Free Encyclopedia URL: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kursk_offensive_\(2024–present\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kursk_offensive_(2024–present)) (Дата обращения 14.03.2025)

⁴ Heavy Fighting Is Underway in the Kursk Region 🇷🇺 The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation Are Retaliating. 🇺🇦 Military Reports and Analysis of 06.08.2024 YouTube Video hosting. URL: <https://youtu.be/dVeuvT9pg0M?si=lVGBqppARxh31yri> (accessed on 25.04.2025)

⁵ Ukraine opens military office in occupied Kursk region, says it is still advancing. “Reuters” News Portal. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-opens-military-office-occupied-kursk-region-says-it-is-still-advancing-2024-08-15/> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

According to representatives of the Ukrainian military command and advisers to the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky, the goals of the operation were⁶:

- Move Russian missile systems and artillery away from Ukrainian territory to protect civilians in border areas.
- Disrupt the logistics routes of Russian troops.
- Demonstrate the failure of the Russian leadership and “transfer the war” to the Russian territory.
- Create conditions for public debate within Russia and provoke discontent among the civilian population.

However, by the end of November 2024, the UAF had lost about 40% of the territories they controlled⁷, and by mid-March 2025, more than 90% of the previously captured territory had been liberated by Russian troops⁸. None of the stated goals of the operation were achieved. And in general, despite the appointment of Eduard Moskaliov as Commander-in-Chief of the UAF⁹, it ended in failure.

Under occupation, the village of Kazachya Loknya was subjected to brutal aggression by Ukrainian combatants. The villagers became hostages of the situation, finding themselves in a zone of armed conflict. The UAF not only placed their military facilities in close proximity to residential buildings, but also committed numerous acts of violence against civilians. Investigative journalism, including materials from *The New York Times*¹⁰ and *BBC Verify*¹¹, confirmed the deaths of civilians as a result of the actions of the Ukrainian military. For example, in the

⁶ The offensive of the UAF in the Kursk region continues. What is Ukraine trying to achieve? Interview with Mikhail Podolyaka from Zelensky’s office. “Meduza” News portal. URL: <https://meduza.io/feature/2024/08/14/nastuplenie-vsu-v-kurskoy-oblasti-prodolzhaetsya-chego-zhe-vse-taki-dobivaetsya-ukraina-intervyu-mihaila-podolyaka-iz-ofisa-zelenskogo> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

⁷ Ukraine has lost more than 40% of the territories it controlled in the Kursk region. “Deutsche Welle” News Portal. URL: <https://www.dw.com/ru/ukraina-poterela-bolee-40-kontroliruemyh-territorij-v-kurskoj-oblasti/a-70867459> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

⁸ Ukraine retains only 10% of the territory it gained from Russia after losing the city of Sudzha. “El País” News Portal. URL: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-03-14/ukraine-retains-only-10-of-the-territory-it-gained-from-russia-after-losing-the-city-of-sudzha.html> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

⁹ The UAF Commander-in-Chief announced the creation of a military commandant’s office in the Kursk region. “Meduza” News Portal. URL: <https://meduza.io/news/2024/08/15/glavkom-vsu-ob-yavil-o-sozdanii-voennoy-komendatury-v-kurskoy-oblasti> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹⁰ Ukraine’s humane treatment of Russian civilians in Kursk becomes a diplomatic tool. “Politico” News Portal. URL: <https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-humane-treatment-russian-civilians-kursk-diplomatic-tool-volodymyr-zelenskyy-vladimir-putin/> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹¹ “There is nowhere to return to”. Residents of Sudzha - about seven months in the city captured by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. “BBC” News Portal. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/russian/articles/c4g01e2m323o> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

vicinity of the village of Korenevo, the bodies of at least seven people in civilian clothes were found, who died in the first days of the offensive. In other cases, such as the incident in the village of Kurilovka, local residents reported the shooting of cars with refugees, including a pregnant woman, and the destruction of houses. Local residents of the occupied territory of the Kursk region spoke of systematic looting, including cases of pillaging of shops, pharmacies and private homes by Ukrainian soldiers.

Many houses were burned down after military facilities were located in them or ammunition was stored. According to eyewitnesses, Ukrainian combatants mocked elderly residents, used offensive language and symbols associated with criminal regimes of the past.

After the liberation of the village of Kazachya Loknya by Russian troops on March 10, 2025, it became clear that the occupation had led to the death of at least 17 people by violence and another 14 people by natural causes related to difficult living conditions. The remaining residents faced destroyed infrastructure, loss of property, psychological and physical trauma.

This public investigation is aimed at documenting all known facts of the events that took place in the village of Kazachya Loknya. Its goal is to restore a complete picture of the tragedy, collect reliable data on the victims, and draw the attention of the public and international organizations to violations of human rights and the principles of international humanitarian law. We strive to achieve justice for the victims, preserve the historical truth and prevent the recurrence of such tragedies in the future.

For the purposes of this investigation, we visited the village of Kazachya Loknya twice in late March and early April 2025, where we inspected the scenes of the alleged crimes. In addition, we voluntarily interviewed several villagers and studied evidence published in open sources.

The events in the village of Kazachya Loknya demonstrate how military actions can destroy the life of a small settlement in a matter of months. This is not just the story of one village – it is a symbol of a tragedy that can be repeated in other

regions if measures are not taken to prevent such crimes. Our investigation will be an important step toward truth, justice and restoring peace.

DEATHS IN THE VILLAGE

Murders of Civilians

The first information about the murders of civilians in the village of Kazachya Loknya began to come from people who managed to leave the settlement in their own vehicles. Thus, on August 8, 2024, information appeared on the Internet about **the injury of three and the death of one civilian** who evacuated from Kazachya Loknya in their own vehicle.¹²

Later, details of this incident appeared, told by the survivors of this incident Nikolai Sergeyenkov¹³ and Galina Samborskaya¹⁴.

On the evening of August 7, 2024, the Sergienkos and Samborskys families tried to leave the village of Kazachya Loknya after the Ukrainian military occupied the settlement. According to witnesses, machine gun fire was heard in the village that day, and local residents feared for their lives. Both families decided to evacuate in their own cars, hoping to return home if the situation normalized. **Nikolai Sergienkov, 69**, and his wife **Tatyana Sergienkova, 67**, were in the first car. The Sergeenkovs were followed by a car with the Samborskys family: Galina Dmitrievna Samborskaya, 75, and her husband. At the village exit, near the *Vasilyok* store, both cars were shot at by a UAF combatant with an automatic weapon. They were attacked suddenly and without warning.

“As soon as we left, a soldier in camouflage uniform stood by the store with a machine gun at the ready: he put his foot on a bench and hop — he fired a burst of machine gun fire at the car in front, and then at us. Theirs — at the top, ours — at the bottom. The distance from us to him was 5 m, no more. It seemed as if he was

¹² Residents of Kazachya Loknya, where there were battles the day before, were only able to leave the village by a miracle - Ukrainian militants were shooting at them with prohibited explosive bullets. “Readovka” Telegram channel URL: <https://t.me/readovkanews/84462> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹³ “Tanya managed to say that she was hit”: eyewitnesses told about the crimes of the UAF against peaceful Russians in the Kursk region. “Cont.ws” Information Portal. URL: <https://cont.ws/@zax2023/2874299> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹⁴ An UAF officer deliberately shot at cars with civilians leaving the Kursk border area. “RuTube” Video hosting. URL: <https://rutube.ru/video/f99234fbd805751a8c9956f0a98d05a2/?r=wd> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

having fun: he just waved the machine gun back and forth,” Galina Samborskaya said.

Nikolai was wounded in the arm and side. His wife Tatyana (see Fig. 1) received several bullet wounds to the head. She died in the car, although her husband continued driving, hoping to save her. Galina Dmitrievna (see Fig. 2) and her husband were also both wounded in the thigh area, but were able to continue driving.

There was virtually no further information from Kazachya Loknya, with the exception of Ukrainian propaganda videos. However, on August 20, 2025, a video was published on the YouTube video hosting under the title “There is always sympathy for civilians, no matter if they are Russians or not” | UP Reporting”¹⁵. The section of the video report from 5:30 to 5:56 shows a run of the Sudzha-Lgov highway near the center of the village of Kazachya Loknya. The video shows the bodies of two people, four motor vehicles damaged as a result of bullets, shrapnel, or explosions. In addition, the video shows an armored vehicle destroyed by the explosion, identified as an Australian-made Bushmaster (see Fig. 3).

The body of a man in **a red Dewo Matis car** without license plates (see Fig. 4) was identified by local residents as the body of a resident of the Kubatkin farm **Vasiliy Maksimovich Polishchuk**. According to witnesses, he **was killed on August 8, 2024**, and later buried in a local cemetery. His wife Valentina was in the car with him, but she managed to escape and take refuge in the house of Nadezhda Kharitonenko. The couple tried to leave the combat zone, but UAF combatants opened fire on their car without warning.

The red VAZ 21099 with the license plate number A 856 UV 46 (see Fig. 5) standing on the roadside with an open hood, doors and trunk is registered to **Anatoly Mikhailovich Belyakov, born January 30, 1959**, from the city of Sudzha. The owner, with the status of “**wanted**”, is listed in the register of persons who have lost contact with relatives on the official website of the governor and government of the Kursk Region.

¹⁵ “There is always sympathy for civilians, whether they are Russians or not” | UP. Reporting. YouTube Video hosting. URL: https://youtu.be/xOTqrD0oUjA?si=d_y31k2fQCoeHvzO (accessed on 25.04.2025).

In addition, there are the **remains of another unknown person** on the road near **the passenger car badly damaged by the explosion**.

The video also shows a **green Volkswagen passenger car** with an open trunk and doors on the passenger side (see Fig. 6). The license plate of this car is illegible, and it is not clear whether there are bodies of the dead inside.

All other information about the events in Kazachya Loknya began to come from local residents after the liberation of the village on March 10, 2025. Thus, Nadezhda Kharitonenko said¹⁶ that on August 7, 2024, shots were heard in the center of the village of Kazachya Loknya. In the evening, her husband **Nikolay Ivanovich Kharitonenko, born in 1957**, went to the center of the village to find out what was happening. Later, his body was found near the local school. He was shot in his back. Antonina Ivanenko said that Nikolai was a very devout person and was going to church to pray, but there he ran into Ukrainian soldiers who shot him¹⁷.

Dmitry Ukhnirov said that on August 7, 2024, near the *Vasilyok* store, UAF soldiers shot at a passenger car (see Fig. 7) with a young couple unknown to him¹⁸. **The man and woman died on the spot**. Later, these people were buried in a local cemetery.¹⁹

Nikolai Ivanenko said that on August 7, 2024, near the *Vasilyok* store, UAF troopers **killed two** of his fellow villagers²⁰. Valentina Dyachenko specified that the men's names were **Mikhail Petrovich Zarudny** and **Nikolai Nikolaevich Chaly**.

On August 9, 2024, a blue minibus Sobol drove along the Sudzha-Lgov highway, in which volunteers were traveling to evacuate civilians. In the center of the village of Kazachya Loknya, the minibus was attacked by UAF combatants. Residents of the village said that they saw **two male bodies** near the "Sobol". One

¹⁶ New facts of inhuman crimes of the UAF against residents of the Kursk region have become known. "RuTube" Video hosting. URL: <https://rutube.ru/video/bbb8896ffdc3895f011cde78f9f7d3da/?r=wd> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹⁷ Video from Irina Krutskikh. VK Social network. URL: https://vk.com/video752345460_456240516 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹⁸ Residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya told about the atrocities of militants in the Kursk borderland. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-99278251_456248593 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

¹⁹ During the occupation 23 people were buried in Kazachya Loknya. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-148321046_456246546 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²⁰ A resident of Kazachya Loknya spoke about the murder of two fellow villagers by the UAF militants. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-24136539_456367588 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

looked about 20 years old; the other was older. Later, these bodies were taken away by UAF representatives in an unknown direction. We discovered and inspected this minibus during a visit to Kazachya Loknya in early April 2025 (see Fig. 8).

In addition, during the inspection of the village, we found a burnt-out Nissan passenger car (see Fig. 9), inside which we saw the badly burnt remains of the bones of two people (see Fig. 10). We also found the car license plate: m005ke46 in the trunk (see Fig. 11). This car is registered to **Olga Anatolyevna Sidelnikova**, who is listed as “**wanted**” in the register of persons who have lost contact with relatives on the official website of the governor and government of the Kursk Region ²¹. This fact, as well as the remains of a woman’s jewelry lying in the car on the bones (see Fig. 12), gives us reason to believe that Olga Anatolyevna was one of the victims in this car. The identity of **the deceased passenger remains unknown**.

The villagers also said that near the church they saw the body of a young man in civilian clothes who had a traumatically amputated lower limb. **The identity of this killed civilian has not been established**.

Another incident occurred in January 2025. One day, **Tatyana Viktorovna Shtets, born in 1971**, went to her farm located in the southern part of the village of Kazachya Loknya to get milk. She was crossing the central bridge of the village of Kazachya Loknya when a car of UAF combatants hit her. Aleksandr Sultanov reported that the woman was knocked down and killed, and later a woman from among the UAF combatants said to the locals “go, take yours”²². Valenina Dyachenko reported that no investigative actions were taken regarding this incident by the Ukrainian occupation authorities, and no one was held accountable.

Thus, in the first days of the UAF invasion of the Kursk Region, at least 11 civilians were killed by UAF combatants in the village of Kazachya Loknya: 5 confirmed victims near the *Vasilyok* store (see Fig. 13) and 6 confirmed victims near the St. Demetrius Church (see Fig. 14). The fate of several more people remains

²¹ Map of hostilities in the Kursk Region. “Kursk.ru” Information Portal. URL: <https://kursk.ru/krb/> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²² “They came in drunk or on drugs”: residents of Kazachya Loknya on the behavior of the UAF troopers in the Kursk region. “RuTube” Video hosting. URL: <https://rutube.ru/video/676409bc862fc1af9d0e314447b5f907/?r=wd> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

unknown. In addition, in January 2025, UAF combatants unintentionally killed another female civilian. Thus, **the total number of civilians killed by UAF combatants through direct impact on victims in the village of Kazachya Loknya is at least 12 people.**

Murders of Persons who Laid down their Arms

Three Russian conscripts who had fallen behind their own troops were hiding in the village of Kazachya Loknya in Batyuka Street. Apparently, they did not seek to continue participating in the armed conflict and did not undertake any hostile actions against the UAF.

From August 16 to 18, 2024, UAF combatants moved through the village checking documents from local residents. Having come across Russian soldiers who were unable to present documents²³, they immediately attacked them, **killing two and capturing the third**²⁴. They set house in which the Russian soldiers were located on fire. And they **mutilated and executed the captured soldier.**

A man who lived next door said: “They shot up the house. Two people were killed in the house. It burned down. And they pulled out the third one and started to abuse him. He was lying in the street. Everyone saw how he was lying. And then his smell got annoying and they buried him.”²⁵

According to witnesses, the captured soldier’s genitals were cut off, which were then placed in the soldier’s helmet next to the body.

Mortality from Natural Causes

Valentina Petrovna Dyachenko kept a personal diary during the occupation. She was able to provide us with a list of residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya

²³ Grave but important footage. Evidence of enemy atrocities in the Kursk region from residents of Kazachya Loknya and surrounding villages. VK Social network. URL: https://vk.com/video-224181914_456240586 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²⁴ Video from Irina Krutskikh. VK Social network. URL: https://vk.com/video752345460_456240516 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²⁵ Ukrainian militants killed captured Russian soldiers. Kazachya Loknya. “RuTube” Video hosting. URL: <https://rutube.ru/video/11982400b7bd7f8bc44a3245037ba1d7/?r=wd> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

who died of natural causes (see Fig. 15). There are **14 names** on this list. This order of figurers is confirmed by other residents of the village²⁶.

It is worth noting that for about a month from the beginning of the occupation, UAF combatants did not allow local residents to bury the killed and deceased²⁷. And only at the beginning of September, before the arrival of foreign correspondents, some of the bodies were allowed to be buried in the village cemetery (see Fig. 16, Fig. 17). Some of the bodies were taken away by UAF combatants in an unknown direction.

According to the portal “city-facts”, the population of the village of Kazachya Loknya from 2000 to 2015 fell from 575 to 495 people ²⁸, i.e. approximately **by 5 persons per year**. The average annual mortality rate in the Kursk Region is 15.5 cases per 1000 people (according to data for 2017)²⁹. Thus, for Kazachya Loknya with a population of about 500 people, such mortality should be no more than **7-8 persons per year**. During the occupation, as mentioned above, the mortality rate from natural causes was 14 people, which is **2 times higher than expected**. These figures, along with the testimony of village residents about the complicated access to medicines and medical care, as well as the impossibility of evacuation, allow us to assert that **the Ukrainian occupation administration created hard living conditions for the residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya, contributing to the high mortality rate.**

²⁶ During the occupation 23 people were buried in Kazachya Loknya. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-148321046_456246546 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²⁷ viktor_klyuev_pro_pokhorony_online_video_cutter_com_1.mp4. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-215688707_456244781 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²⁸ Population of Kazachya Loknya. City-Facts” Information Portal. URL: <https://ru.city-facts.com/kazachya-loknya/population> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

²⁹ Information about the Kursk region. “Duck Consulting” Analytical Portal. URL: <https://russia.duck.consulting/regions/46> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

USE OF HUMAN SHIELDS

Residents of Kazachya Loknya testified that the UAF troopers massively deployed military equipment, artillery guns, and electronic warfare systems in close proximity to civilians' residences.

Elena Grafonova reported: "My house stood, and there was a cannon opposite. There was another cannon in the vegetable gardens. There were two more cannons on the side"³⁰

Valentina Gennadyevna Matchenko reported: "There is a tank buried next to the barn. They dug trenches under the barns in our vegetable gardens and hid."³¹

A man named Franz, who lives at 93, Batyukova Street, reported that there were Ukrainian artillery positions opposite his house.

Ten-year-old Sergei Shcheglov and his father were able to film a tank and a UAF howitzer,³² located in the immediate vicinity of their house in Kazachya Loknya.

During our inspection of the St. Demetrius Church, we discovered traces of Ukrainian drone operators in the church³³ (see Fig. 17, Fig. 19). In the immediate vicinity of the Mass Grave of Soviet Army soldiers who died during the Great Patriotic War, located near the church, there were positions of a Ukrainian 155 mm gun³⁴ (see Fig. 19, Fig. 21), and there was an ammunition depot in the community center opposite the church (see Fig. 22).

The map of losses of Ukrainian armored vehicles, published on the Internet portal "LostArmour"³⁵ also clearly demonstrates the massive use of residential

³⁰ Residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya spoke about the abuses of the UAF militants. REN TV News Portal. URL: <https://ren.tv/player/video/embed/1315565#autoplay=1> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³¹ Residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya told about the atrocities of militants in the Kursk borderland. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-99278251_456248593 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³² 10-year-old Seryozha from Kazachya Loknya. VK Social network. URL: https://vk.com/video-56835263_456255718 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³³ Saving the heritage: the story of one icon. "Verum Donbass" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/verum_donbass/4101 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³⁴ Realities of war: Kazachya Loknya. "Verum Donbass" Telegram Channel. URL: https://t.me/verum_donbass/4114 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³⁵ Map of equipment losses. "LostArmour" Information Portal. URL: https://lostarmour.info/map_la (accessed on 25.04.2025).

buildings in the village to camouflage equipment and combat positions (see Fig. 23). This, along with preventing the evacuation of civilians, posed a serious threat to the life and health of the latter.

Valentina Petrovna Dyachenko, along with a list of village residents who died of natural causes, also gave us a list of violently dead civilians known to her (see Fig. 24). This list of people killed as a result of direct impact from the UAF combatants includes 5 people killed as a result of artillery shelling attacks.

Thus, it can be stated that the **UAF placed their positions and equipment in close proximity to the location of civilians, which could have led to the death of the latter as a result of attacks on military targets**. This behavior can be qualified as using civilians as human shields.

ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS

Whereas the murders of civilians in Kazachya Loknya by UAF combatants as a result of direct impact were committed mainly in the first days of the occupation, **cases of violence against civilians continued throughout the entire period of occupation.**

A female resident of Kazachya Loknya, on condition of anonymity, said: *“The man who brought me food ran to me, all bloody. I bandaged his finger. And his chest was all cut, because a soldier hit him with this butt and said, if you show up again... don’t show up here again. He threatened life. We were afraid to go outside after three.”*³⁶

Viktor Klyuyev claimed that he was beaten by UAF combatants. According to him, when they were checking his passport, one of the UAF combatants did not like something and the man was hit with a rifle butt, as a result of which he lost consciousness.³⁷

Yana Provotorova reported that when they were going for rations, they had an altercation with one of the Ukrainian combatants, as a result of which her husband was beaten “for not knowing the Ukrainian language” and they “were simply forced to their knees and shot along the ground, in the knee area”³⁸.

The next time, Ukrainian combatants came to their home. *“We had a conversation with the girls. I didn’t have time to hide the girls, because it was night, it was already dark, where would I hide them. But they didn’t touch the girl, they talked to the grandmother. Two of them were beating my husband, and one of them talked to me a couple of times, I got hit in the ribs too,”* Yana said.³⁹

³⁶ New facts of inhuman crimes of the UAF against residents of the Kursk region have become known. “RuTube” Video hosting. URL: <https://rutube.ru/video/bbb8896ffdc3895f011cde78f9f7d3da/?r=wd> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³⁷ Grave but important footage. Evidence of enemy atrocities in the Kursk region from residents of Kazachya Loknya and surrounding villages. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-224181914_456240586 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³⁸ UAF soldiers brutally beat a resident of the Kursk village of Kazachya Loknya for not knowing the Ukrainian language. “RuTube” Video hosting URL: <https://rutube.ru/video/9c9d13b96b0215f28e246c447ad00973/?r=wd> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

³⁹ A female resident of the village of Kazachya Loknya told about the information propaganda of the UAF. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-219699789_456249019 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

A woman named Lyudmila claimed: *“Ukrainian soldiers came to my son-in-law. He is a young boy, 25 years old. They asked: “Why aren’t you in the army? Why are you here? You probably served in the SMO, didn’t you?” He got it pretty bad. They beat him up. His ribs there... You couldn’t even see his face. Swelling. It went away with time. There was nowhere to go.”*⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Residents of Kazachya Loknya in the Kursk Region told about the abuses of the UAF militants. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-26493942_456376002 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

LOOTING AND PILLAGING

From the very first days of the occupation, UAF combatants began pillaging and looting. According to Valentina Dyachenko, they first took out equipment and property from the territory of the Miratorg pig farm⁴¹, and also took out valuables from houses whose owners were able to evacuate. According to the woman, this continued for about a month. After the property of the evacuated people was looted, the UAF combatants switched to the property of the civilians who remained in the village.

Moreover, **the Ukrainian military commandant's office, deployed in the village, did not prevent the looting and pillaging committed by Ukrainian combatants. The latter fact testifies to the systematic nature of the robbery of the settlement and the responsibility of the high command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for this.**

However, cases of taking away property from civilians who remained in the village began from the first days of the occupation of the village.

Thus, Nikolay Pavlovich Ivanenko stated, "On the very first day, they took away my old car and took out all the most valuable things from the house. I had a large TV hanging in the living room. They took the TV; they took the gas stove. In general, they stole everything they could."⁴²

A woman named Irina said that she saw the UAF combatants looting. "They were driving the car into the yard. I saw them leaving, a full car of washing machines, a refrigerator, household appliances, I personally saw it myself. Even the furniture... Well, they took everything, everything,"⁴³ said a resident of Kazachya Loknya.

Valentina Gennadyevna Matchenko told about the revenge of Ukrainian combatants for refusing to give a car: "They came, asked a neighbor for a car, he

⁴¹ In the village of Kazachya Loknya in the Kursk region, UAF terrorists are stealing tractors, KamAZ trucks, and combines from the territory of the Miratorg pig farm. "Aleksandr Semchenko" Telegram channel. URL: <https://t.me/AleksandrSemchenko/44169> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

⁴² A resident of Kazachya Loknya spoke about the murder of two fellow villagers by the UAF militants. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-24136539_456367588 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

⁴³ The Investigative Committee reported on the atrocities of the UAF militants in Kazachya Loknya. "REN TV" News Portal. URL: <https://ren.tv/video/embed/1319638#autoplay=1> (accessed on 25.04.2025).

didn't give it to them. They set his house on fire. And my house burned down too. It wasn't just mine that burned down. Three houses burned down at once.”⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya told about the atrocities of militants in the Kursk borderland. VK Social Network. URL: https://vk.com/video-99278251_456248593 (accessed on 25.04.2025).

MILITARY PRESENCE

Konstantin Zavyalov said that he saw UAF combatants in the village who spoke Polish and had chevrons with the Polish flag, as well as English-speaking and French-speaking militants. In addition, there were UAF combatants who avoided communicating with civilians with characteristic Asian facial features. Konstantin called them “Koreans”.

This information was confirmed by Valentina Dyachenko: “I did not hear the language, but they were Koreans, because they did not speak that language any more. Because we were watching TV and immediately determined that they were Koreans. Then we heard “go-go”. These were either English or Americans. Well, and French speech is difficult to confuse it with any other speech. I did not meet Poles. And a woman I know said that someone told her that he was from a state, I don’t remember the name, either Columbia or Canada.”

In addition to foreign-speaking militants, according to village residents, there were also Ukrainian-speaking combatants of the UAF.

Thus, it can be stated with a high degree of probability that combatants from the International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine⁴⁵, which gathered almost all foreigners fighting on the side of Ukraine, could have been present in the village of Kazachya Loknya during its occupation.

At the same time, the Ukrainian military commandant’s office in the territory of the Russian Federation ⁴⁶, was deployed in the village focusing its activities on suppressing resistance from the local population, but did not take any action to punish Ukrainian combatants for the war crimes they committed.

⁴⁵ International Legion (Ukraine). “Wikipedia” Free Encyclopedia. URL: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Legion_\(Ukraine\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Legion_(Ukraine)) (accessed on 25.04.2025).

⁴⁶ Ukrainian military commandant’s office in the RF territory. “Wikipedia” Free Encyclopedia. URL: https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Військова_комендатура_на_території_РФ (accessed on 25.04.2025).

CONCLUSIONS

The village of Kazachya Loknya was occupied by the UAF from August 7, 2024 to March 10, 2025. During the first days of the occupation, the UAF combatants fired at all cars and people in the streets of the village, not observing the principle of distinction and violating the ban on attacks on civilians. As a result, 11 civilians were intentionally killed by Ukrainian combatants in the territory of the village. There are good reasons to believe that there were more such deaths. In addition, as a result of a road traffic accident involving a UAF car, Tatyana Viktorovna Shtets, born in 1971, died. Thus, the total number of civilians killed by UAF combatants through direct impact on victims in the village of Kazachya Loknya is at least 12 people.

During August 16-18, 2024, the UAF combatants killed two and tortured and executed one wounded Russian conscript, who apparently laid down their arms.

As a result of the lack of proper access to medicine and medical care, difficult living conditions and the ban on evacuation by the Ukrainian occupation administration, natural mortality was twice as high as usual and reached 14 people. Apparently, harsh living conditions were deliberately created for the residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya, contributing to the high mortality rate.

Residents of Kazachya Loknya testified that the UAF troopers massively deployed military equipment, artillery guns, and electronic warfare systems in close proximity to civilians' residences, which could have led to the death of the latter as a result of attacks on military targets. This behavior can be qualified as using civilians as human shields.

Whereas the murders of civilians in Kazachya Loknya by UAF combatants as a result of direct impact were committed mainly in the first days of the occupation, cases of violence against civilians continued throughout the entire period of occupation.

Pillaging and looting were actively committed in the village throughout the entire period of occupation. Moreover, the Ukrainian military commandant's office,

deployed in the village, did not prevent the looting and pillaging committed by Ukrainian combatants. The latter fact testifies to the systematic nature of the robbery of the settlement and the responsibility of the high command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for this.

Thus, it can be asserted that under occupation, the village of Kazachya Loknya was subjected to brutal aggression by Ukrainian combatants. The villagers became hostages of the situation, finding themselves in a zone of armed conflict. The UAF not only placed their military facilities in close proximity to residential buildings, but also committed numerous acts of violence against civilians in widespread violation of international humanitarian law.

During the occupation of the village of Kazachya Loknya, combatants from the International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine may have been present.

Moreover, the Ukrainian military commandant's office in the territory of the Russian Federation, was deployed in the village focusing its activities on suppressing resistance from the local population, but did not take any action to punish Ukrainian combatants for the war crimes they committed.

The highest military-political leadership of Ukraine is responsible for crimes committed during this armed conflict. Namely: President and Supreme Commander-in-Chief **Volodymyr Zelensky** and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine **Oleksandr Syrskiy**.

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS

1. The murders of civilians by Ukrainian combatants through direct impact on the target violates the following norms of international humanitarian law (IHL):

Article 3 of the General Provisions of the Geneva Conventions prohibits, with respect to persons who do not take an active part in hostilities, “*violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture*”.

Article 51(2) of Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions provides: “The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack.”

2. Torture and murder of persons who have laid down their arms violate the following norms of IHL:

Article 13 of the Geneva Convention III stipulates “*Prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated. Any unlawful act or omission by the Detaining Power causing death or seriously endangering the health of a prisoner of war in its custody is prohibited, and will be regarded as a serious breach of the present Convention. [...] no prisoner of war may be subjected to physical mutilation...*”

Article 17 of the Geneva Convention III provides “*No physical or mental torture, nor any other form of coercion, may be inflicted on prisoners of war to secure from them information of any kind whatever.*”

In accordance with **Article 130 of the Geneva Convention III**, *wilful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, compelling a prisoner of war to serve in the forces of the hostile Power, or are qualifies as grave breaches of the Convention, making them war crimes.*”

3. The creation of conditions that lead to increased mortality among the civilian population due to complicated access to medicines and medical care violates the following rules of IHL:

Article 27 of the Geneva Convention IV requires humane treatment of all protected persons (civilian population) in occupied territory by the occupying power.

Article 55 of the Geneva Convention IV obliges the occupying power to “*ensure the food and medical supplies of the civilian population.*”

Article 56 of the Geneva Convention IV obliges the occupying power to ensure and maintain “*the medical and hospital establishments and services, public health and hygiene in the occupied territory.*”

4. The deployment of military equipment and positions by the UAF near housing accommodation of civilians violates the following norms of IHL:

Article 51 of Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions stipulates that “*The presence or movements of the civilian population or individual civilians shall not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations, in particular in attempts to shield military objectives from attacks or to shield, favour or impede military operations.*”

Article 58 of Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions requires parties to a conflict to avoid, to the maximum extent feasible, “*the locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas.*”

5. Acts of violence (beatings) against civilians violate the following rules of IHL:

Article 27 of the Geneva Convention IV obliges the occupying power to protect the civilian population “*against any acts of violence or intimidation.*”

In accordance with **Article 32 of the Geneva Convention IV**, “*it is prohibited from taking any measure of such a character as to cause the physical suffering or extermination of protected persons in their hands. This prohibition applies not only to murder, torture, corporal punishment, mutilation and medical or scientific experiments not necessitated by the medical treatment of a protected person, but also to any other measures of brutality whether applied by civilian or military agents.*”

According to **Article 147 of the Geneva Convention IV**, such actions are defined as grave breaches of the Convention, making them war crimes.

6. Pillaging and looting of civilians violate the following IHL rules:

Article 33 of the Geneva Convention IV prohibits pillaging.

According to Article 147 of the Geneva Convention IV, such actions are defined as grave breaches of the Convention, making them war crimes.

Article 46 of the Hague Convention IV (1907) states, “Family honour and rights, the lives of persons, and private property, as well as religious convictions and practice, must be respected. Private property cannot be confiscated.”

Article 47 of the Hague Convention IV (1907) stipulates, “*Pillage is formally forbidden.*”

All six crimes violate international humanitarian law and may be qualified as war crimes under the Geneva Conventions, their Additional Protocols and other sources of IHL.


Depending on the context and intent, some acts may also qualify as crimes against humanity or genocide.

Such acts entail liability both at the international level and at the level of national legislation.

In compliance with **Art. 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine**, for “... *use of methods of the warfare prohibited by international instruments, or any other violations of rules of the warfare recognized by international instruments consented to be binding by the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine, and also giving an order to commit any such actions*”, shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of eight to twelve years, and if the same acts accompanied with an intended murder, shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of **ten to fifteen years, or life imprisonment**.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1



Fig. 1 - Nikolay and Tatyana Sergeenkova.



Fig. 2 - Galina Samborskaya in hospital.



Fig. 3 - The center of the village of Kazachya Loknya in August 2024: on the left is a damaged Bushmaster armored vehicle, in the center is a red Daewoo Matis car, on the right is a heavily damaged passenger car, with an unidentified human body in the foreground.



Fig. 4 - Daewoo Matiz car with the body of Vasily Maksimovich Polischuk in the driver's seat.



Fig. 5 - A frame in which the license plate of a red VAZ car was recognized.



Fig. 6 - The center of the village of Kazachya Loknya in August 2024: on the left - a red VAZ 21099 car with state registration number A 856 UV 46, on the right - a green Volkswagen passenger car.



Fig. 7 - The car of an unknown young couple, near the Vasilyok store.



Fig. 8 - Minibus "Sobol" near the church in the village of Kazachya Loknya.



Fig. 9 - A Nissan car on the roadside in the center of the village of Kazachya Loknya.



Fig. 10 - The remains of two people in a burnt-out Nissan car.



Fig. 11 - The license plate found in the trunk of a Nissan vehicle.



Fig. 12 - Women's jewelry on the remains of the dead bodies.

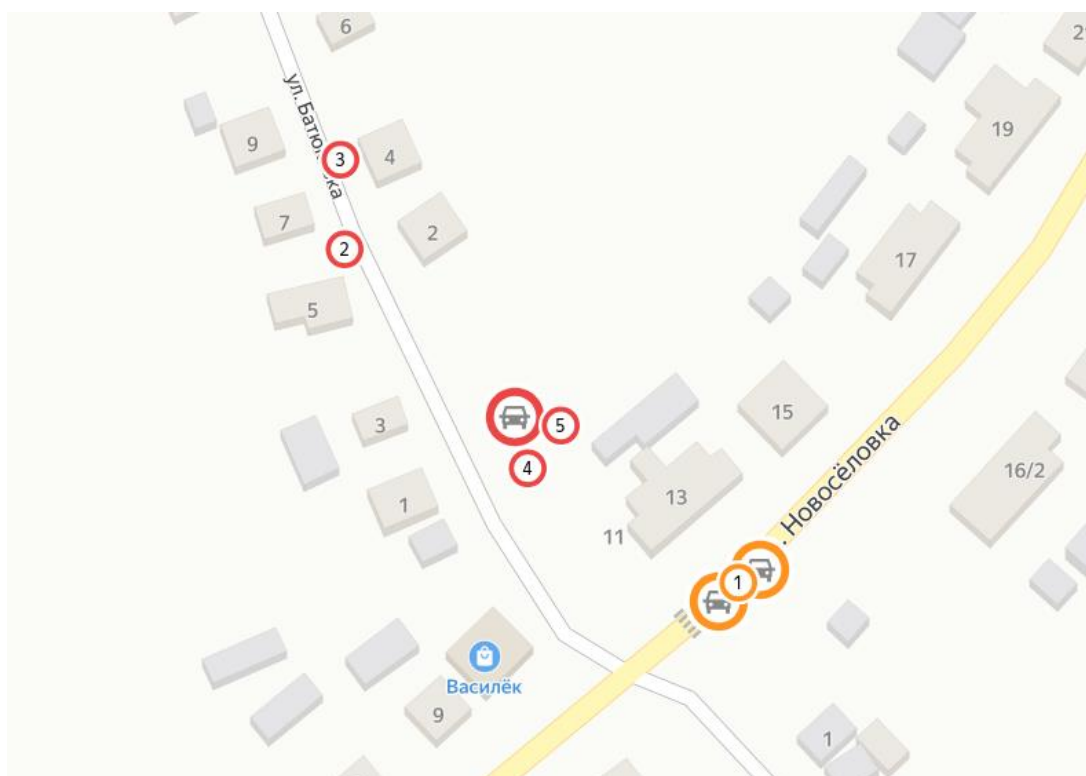


Fig. 13 - Scheme of murders of civilians in the vicinity of the Vasilyok store.

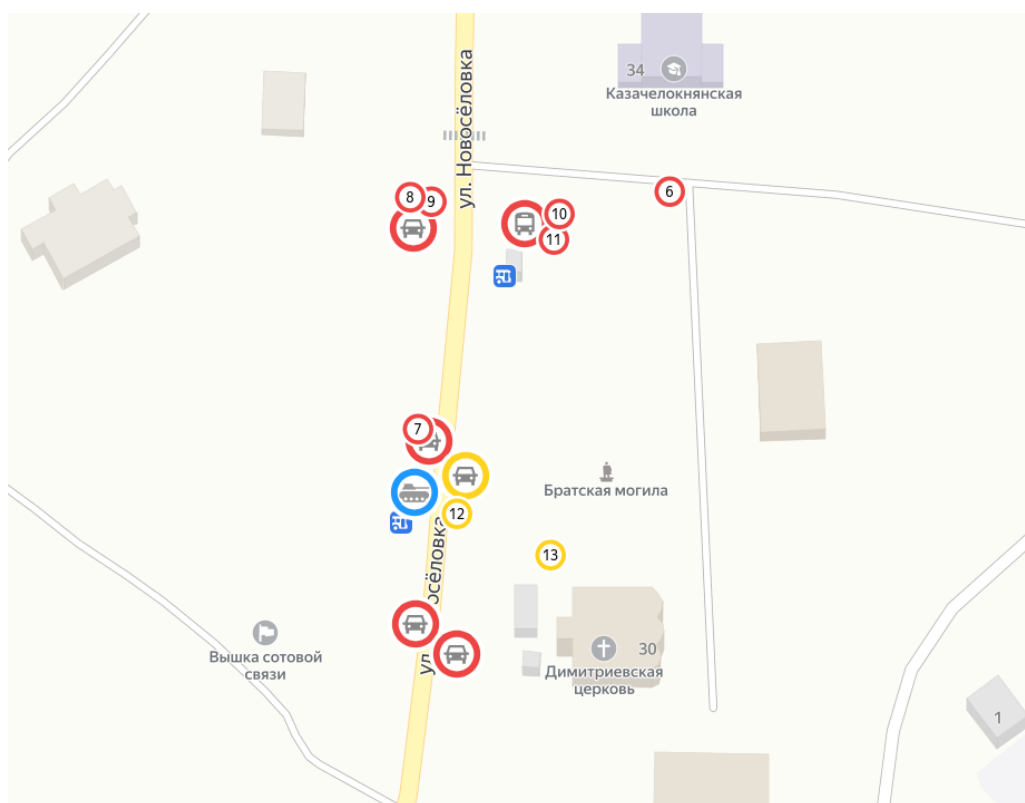


Fig. 14 - Scheme of murders of civilians in the vicinity of the St. Demetrius Church.

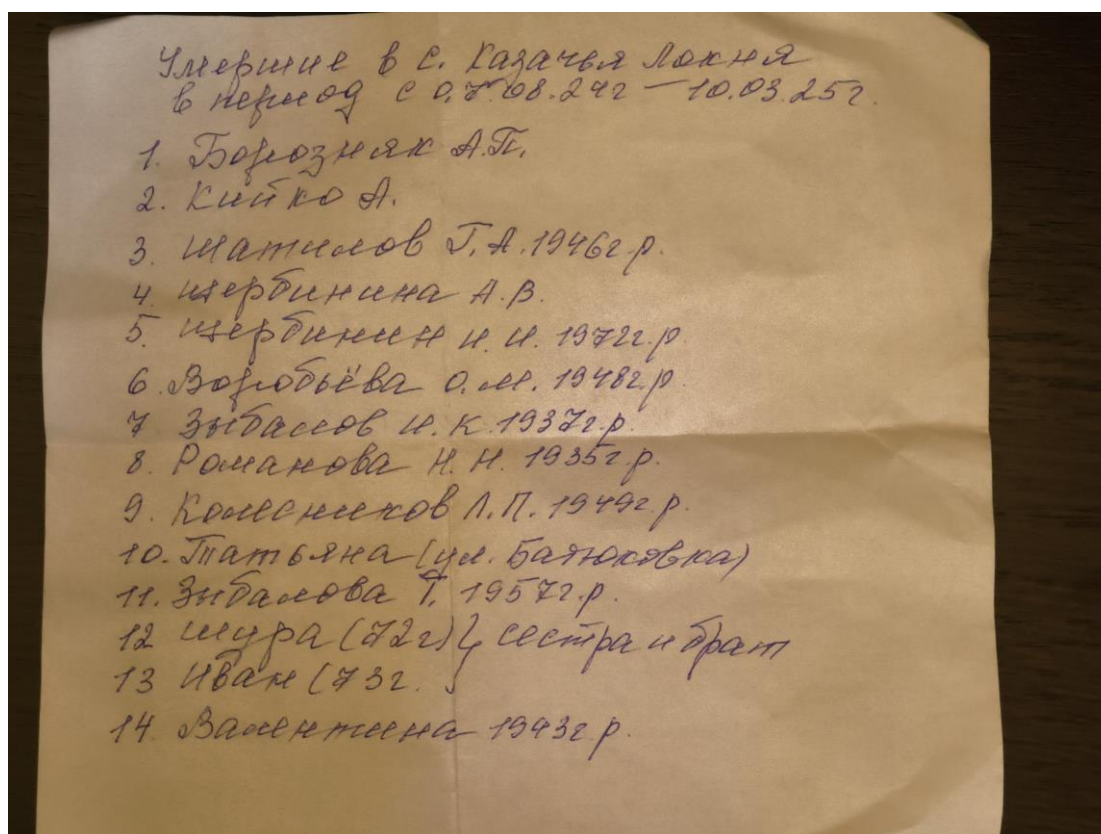


Fig. 15 - List of residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya who died from natural causes.



Fig. 16 - Grave of Borozdnyak A.P.



Fig. 17 - Grave of Ushakova T.N.



Fig. 18 - A package from a UAV from the “Molfar” Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicle complex, found in the St. Demetrius Church.



Fig. 19 - RPG-7 warheads prepared for use with FPV drones found in St. Demetrius Church.



Fig. 20 - An operational gunpowder depot for a 155-mm artillery gun near the Mass Grave in the center of the village of Kazachya Loknya.



Fig. 21 - An operational gunpowder depot for a 155-mm artillery gun near the Mass Grave in the center of the village of Kazachya Loknya.



Fig. 22 - An ammunition depot for a 155-mm artillery gun in the village club of Kazachya Loknya.

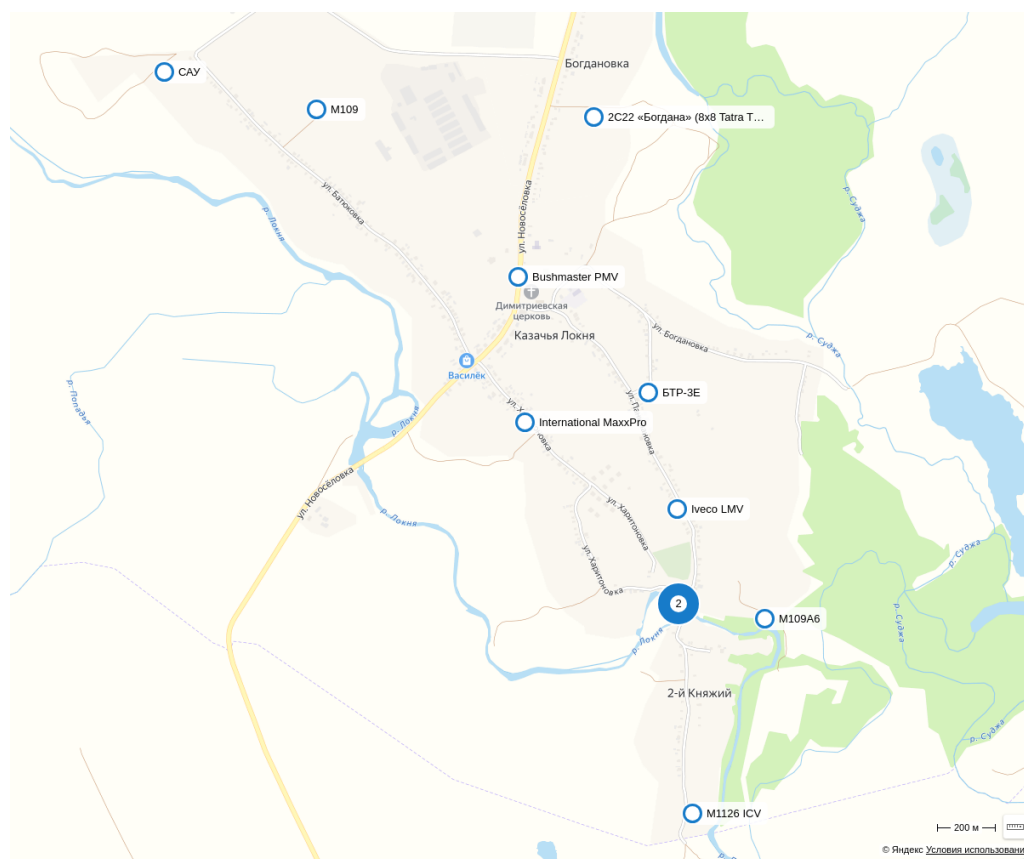


Fig. 23 - Losses of Ukrainian armored vehicles in the village of Kazachya Loknya.

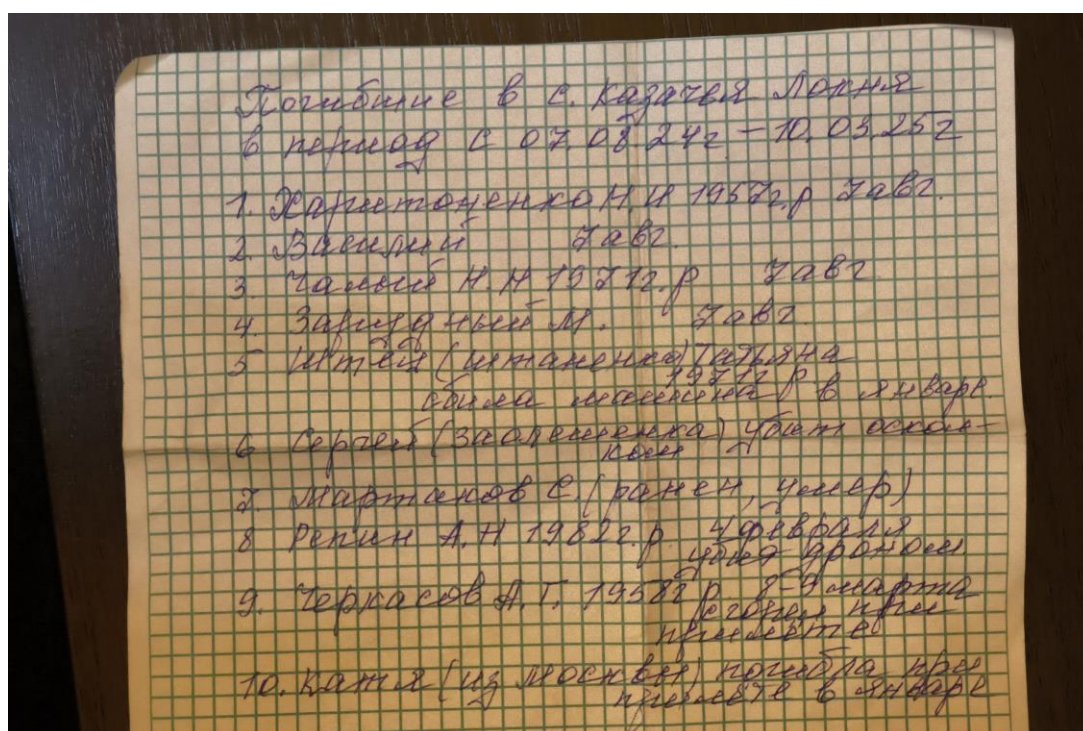


Fig. 24 - List of residents of the village of Kazachya Loknya who died by violence.