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■/ link in the last tweet. A tapped call reveals the high-ranked Russian officer, commander of the 27th Separate Guards Motor Rifle Brigade Sergey Safonov, stabbed to death an elderly Ukrainian woman when retreating from the Kharkiv region. His comrade also shot her husband. <https://t.co/TaB072QTNA>



Today our colleagues from @cxemu investigative project published their OTG report about volunteers from the city of Izyum, who buried the bodies of local civilians and Ukrainian soldiers killed during the Russian occupation. <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/skhemy-spovidi-z-izyuma/32155419.html>

Part of the story is a tapped call, obtained by @cxemu from UA authorities. A guy on the tape describes the chaotic retreat of the Russian forces. <https://youtu.be/2eohuKEOR7I?t=1120>

Translation: "They were evacuating, an elderly man and a woman came in their way. Battalion commander from 96th shot the man, and our bad guy, the superior one, stabbed the woman to death".

According to the call, this unprovoked murder happened on September 25th, 5 days before the Russians lost control over the strategically important city of Lyman. Battalion commander have been sent there actually to evacuate 27th brigade commander (illustrative photo). <https://t.co/gLE7rxKmWS>



The phone number allowed to track its owner, Oleg Gasilin (on the right on the photo below). <https://t.co/Z23X8UvKiZ>



As open sources show, Gasilin serves in 27th Separate Guards Motor Rifle Brigade, unit 61899, based in Mosrentgen, a small town near Moscow, which was included in the city limits in 2012. Part of the 1st TA since 2014. <https://archive.ph/9DAPj>

In another part of the tapped call, Gasilin specifies that by "our bad guy" he means the brigade's commander. The commander of the 27th brigade, according to several open sources, is Colonel (Guards) Sergey Safonov <https://www.letovochurch.ru/novosti/novosti-khrama/v-ch-61899-tseremoniya-proshchaniya-so-znamenem/>. <https://t.co/ODpCWBkVGP>

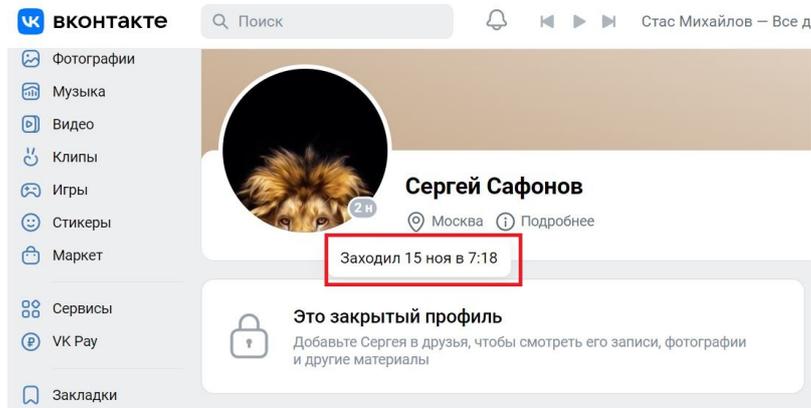


.@cxemu reached out to Gasilin, who disclosed an interesting fact: he had already spoken to official investigators in relation to this murder, which means it didn't come unnoticed even within the RU army – though Gasilin himself only have heard about the murder, not witnessed it.

A Russian lawyer we spoke to says the fact of such an interrogation means that the suspect probably has already been detained. We identified a dozen of Safonov's friends and all his relatives. Some of them answered our questions. <https://t.co/2Jeh46qoVV>



None of them denied that the investigation is ongoing, nor any were surprised. Still, they hesitated to confirm it directly. One asked us what we know exactly about the case ourselves. Safonov himself hasn't been online since Nov. 15th (though there may be other reasons for that) <https://t.co/ZIs1200dHX>



In the tapped call Gasilin also describes the chaotic retreat, mentioning that Safonov knew about massive number of KIAs, but didn't report them to his commanders – which is typical and one of the root problems of the Russian army on any level.

https://twitter.com/ChrisO_wiki/status/1570169288849326082

Translation, part 1: "They kicked our butts, like Frenchmen did back in 1812. Most important: brigade commander didn't tell we're going to retreat, where are we going to go, where do we gather". <https://youtu.be/2eohuKEOR7I?t=1048>

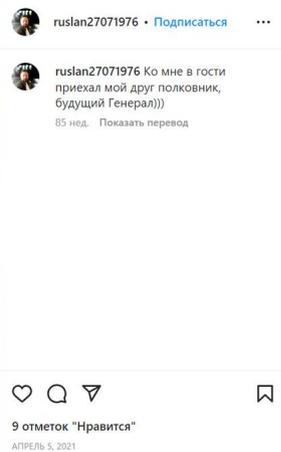
Translation part 2: "Next day he reported to the army – he didn't report that all AA gunners fled, didn't tell them a word about our losses, though he knew himself. Signalmen's equipment have all been burned out, we had no communication link with the brigade". <https://t.co/5vyTleV0nm>



Translation part 3: "What happened to infantry is unclear too, one battalion seemed to escape, no one can find the second one".

Killing the elderly couple was not an isolated incident, says Gasilin. "We were on a IFV, smashed one civilian car with khohols into pieces", – he says about yet another episode of killing civilians. <https://youtu.be/2eohuKEOR7I?t=1025>

Safonov had a perfect career: Moscow Higher Command School, elite Tamanskaya division, 100th Support Regiment (created personally by Shojgu), awarded Order of Courage for Syria. "My friend, the colonel, future general" – his friend wrote, and he was not wrong back in 2021. <https://t.co/15HzBhaEdg>



The war in Ukraine turned things upside down. 27th brigade suffered painful losses during the first days of war near the city of Sumy. POWs, who name Safonov as their commander, say they were "dropped in the middle of nowhere as a kittens" without food, fuel or any support.

Some of POWs from the 27th brigade say they were easily taken prisoners by Sumy territorial defense dressed in civilian clothes. Maybe that's why he was triggered by that elderly couple? https://t.me/rf200_nooow/702

Even if Safonov will escape any charges, his career seems to be ruined. 27th brigade escaped from Kharkiv region in a fully chaotic manner, leaving a lot of equipment, including modern T-90 tanks illustrative video) <https://twitter.com/donikroman/status/1523925065909342210>

Now 27th brigade an entry hub for mobiks, who complain about the same things all mobiks do: poor equipment, no training, etc, etc. Some refused to fight and were detained in infamous basements in Zaycevo ("LPR") <https://verstka.media/otkazniki-v-podvalah-lugansk/>

On this recent video you can see the premises of the unit 61899: conscripts complain they're being sent to Ukraine with Hepatitis C, which effectively means being dead after the first serious wound (https://t.me/ostorozhno_novosti/12469). <https://t.co/n52b5mgB4N>

Read the full story about Russian colonel, involved into the murder of elderly Ukrainian woman, here: (Google Translate for your language). <https://www.svoboda.org/a/nehoroshiy-chelovek-rossiyskiy-polkovnik-i-ubiystvo-mirnyh-zhiteley/32153654.html>

This story was made possible by our brave journalists working on the ground in Ukraine, as well as their colleagues doing their job in harsh conditions caused by damage to Ukrainian infrastructure inflicted by Russian strikes. Please praise their efforts!

Personal credits where they are due: to my colleague and as always reliable co-author [@pustota](#), brilliant TV star [@ValeriaEgoshyna](#), to [@Mike_Eckel](#) for some tricky slang translation tips and [@natasedletska](#) for making things running smooth!