

E101

Suspicious Deaths and Murders in Ukraine (January-April 2015)

Topic Description

In the early months of 2015, at least ten Ukrainian government figures and journalists either died under mysterious circumstances or were boldly murdered. Those who were not obviously murdered were ruled suicides. The first was Mykola Serhiyenko, who apparently shot himself in his home on 26 January, followed by Oleksiy Kolesnyk (29 January), Serhiy Valter (25 February), Oleksandr Bordyuh (26 February), Mykhaylo Chechetov (27 or 28 February), Stanislav Melnyk (9 March), Oleksandr Peklushenko (12 March), Sergei Melnychuk (13 March), Sergey Sukhobok (13 or 16 April), Oleg Kalashnikov (15 or 16 April), and finally Oles Buzyna (16 April). All were known to hold pro-Russian sentiment, and many were members of the pro-Russian Party of Regions. The international community remained largely quiet regarding these deaths, though Amnesty International stated that the deaths warranted closer investigation. Some media outlets point out the similarities between these and other high-profile deaths suspiciously ruled as suicide in Ukraine's recent past.

Expected Conflicting Information

While these murders and mysterious deaths have been investigated, a suspect or suspects seem elusive. A group calling themselves the Ukrainian Insurgent Army did claim responsibility, but law enforcement has dismissed this as false. News commentary from the time suggests Right Sector as the most likely culprit. There was a strain of people, possibly including president Petro Poroshenko, who suggested the deaths might have been orchestrated by the Russian government and committed by the Russian Special Services in an attempt to incite more unrest in Kiev following the 2014 revolution.

Queries

E101_Q001	Who carried out the killing of Mykola Serhiyenko?
E101_Q002	Who was behind the killing of Mykola Serhiyenko?
E101_Q003	Who carried out the killing of Oleksiy Kolesnyk?
E101_Q004	Who was behind the killing of Oleksiy Kolesnyk?
E101_Q005	Who carried out the killing of Serhiy Valter?
E101_Q006	Who was behind the killing of Serhiy Valter?
E101_Q007	Who carried out the killing of Oleksandr Bordyuh?
E101_Q008	Who was behind the killing of Oleksandr Bordyuh?
E101_Q009	What caused the death of Oleksandr Bordyuh?
E101_Q010	Who carried out the killing of Mykhaylo Chechetov?
E101_Q011	Who assisted in the killing of Mykhaylo Chechetov?
E101_Q012	Who was behind the killing of Mykhaylo Chechetov?

E101_Q013	When did Mykhaylo Chechetov die?
E101_Q014	Who carried out the killing of Stanislav Melnyk?
E101_Q015	Who was behind the killing of Stanislav Melnyk?
E101_Q016	Who carried out the killing of Oleksandr Peklushenko?
E101_Q017	Who was behind the killing of Oleksandr Peklushenko?
E101_Q018	Who carried out the killing of Sergei Melnychuk?
E101_Q019	Who was behind the killing of Sergei Melnychuk?
E101_Q020	When did Sergei Melnychuk die?
E101_Q021	Who carried out the killing of Sergey Sukhobok?
E101_Q022	Who was behind the killing of Sergey Sukhobok?
E101_Q023	When did Sergey Sukhobok die?
E101_Q024	Who carried out the killing of Oleg Kalashnikov?
E101_Q025	Who was behind the killing of Oleg Kalashnikov?
E101_Q026	Where was Oleg Kalashnikov killed?
E101_Q027	Who carried out the killing of Oles Buzyna?
E101_Q028	Who assisted in the killing of Oles Buzyna?
E101_Q029	Who was behind the killing of Oles Buzyna?

E102

Odessa Tragedy (May 2, 2014)

Topic Description

On 2 May 2014, as part of rising unrest following the 2014 Ukrainian revolution, clashes broke out between pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian activists in the streets of Odessa following a march of joint-Ukrainian fans of two Ukrainian soccer teams. Clashes seem to have begun on Grecheskaya Street, then moved to a camp of pro-Russian activists in Kulikovskoye Field. A small number of pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian activists were reportedly killed by gunfire in street battles. Fires broke out in the camp and, later, the nearby Union Trade Building (or Trade Unions House), in which reports indicate as many as several hundred people died.

Expected Conflicting Information

Sources conflict on whether or not the riots were organized, and by whom (Ukrainian nationalists, Ukrainian government, Russian secret service [FSB/GRU]). Was violence deliberately provoked, and by whom (Russian secret service, representatives of other foreign entities, pro-Ukrainian activists posing as pro-Russian activists, etc.)? Were militant groups, not just activists, involved in the violence? There are also conflicting casualty reports, such as how many people died (some sources say as few as 36, others as many as 397), and when and where were people killed? In the Union Trade Building specifically, conflicts concern the source of the fire (whether started deliberately or by accident, and by whom), as well as how those inside died (burned, jumped to their deaths, hunted and shot or stabbed before being set on fire?).

Queries

E102_Q001	Who started the violence in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q002	Who was behind the violence in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q003	What was the cause of the fire in the Trade Union Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q004	Who started the fire in the Trade Union Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q005	Who was behind the fire in the Trade Union Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q006	Who were the victims of the fire in or near the Trade Union Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q007	What was the cause of death of victims in or near the Trade Union Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014?
E102_Q008	How many victims were killed in or near the Trade Union Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014?

E103

Siege of Sloviansk and Battle of Kramatorsk (April-July 2014)

Topic Description

Pro-Russian insurgents claiming to operate under the banner of the recently-formed Donbass People's Militia (DPM) captured several government facilities, including police stations, administrative centers, and a military airfield, in the Donetsk Oblast cities of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk on 12 April 2014 and subsequently gained control of those cities. A Ukrainian government counter-offensive was underway by 15 April, instigating the first major military engagement between pro-Russian separatists and the Ukrainian military since the change in the Ukrainian government earlier that year. Fighting in the cities over the ensuing months consisted of violent skirmishes between multiple parties for control of various buildings or areas, as well as abductions of and attacks on civilians, including journalists and public officials. On 5 July 2014, separatist combatants retreated to Kramatorsk from Sloviansk, and that same day, prime minister of the Donetsk People's Republic Alexander Borodai confirmed the withdrawal of DPM forces from Kramatorsk, ceding both cities to Ukrainian government forces.

Expected Conflicting Information

The bulk of conflicting information concerns whether Russian special forces were involved in the fighting in Sloviansk and Kramatorsk. The Ukrainian government claimed to have proof that active-duty Russian soldiers were fighting in eastern Ukraine, citing photos of armed men in military uniforms lacking identifiable insignia, some of whom were allegedly photographed during previous known Russian military operations elsewhere. These men came to be known as "men in green" or "little green men," and their affiliation with Russia, as well as with other countries and agencies such as the United States or Right Sector, was variously proven and disproven throughout the conflict. Related conflict concerns the source, whether Russian or Ukrainian, of sophisticated weapons and vehicles used by separatists, and whether they were willfully given, bought, or stolen. There is also considerable conflict concerning an attack on an insurgent checkpoint on 20 April which was said to violate an Easter truce between the two sides. Parties disagree over who instigated the attack, and reports seem unable to agree on how many people were killed in the attack.

Queries

E103_Q001	Who was present at the Siege of Sloviansk and/or the Battle of Kramatorsk in April-July 2014?
E103_Q002	What were the affiliations of people present at the Siege of Sloviansk and/or the Battle of Kramatorsk in April-July 2014?
E103_Q003	Who had weapons, tanks, and/or other military vehicles at the Siege of Sloviansk and/or the Battle of Kramatorsk in April-July 2014?
E103_Q004	How were weapons, tanks, and/or other military vehicles used in the Siege of Sloviansk and/or the Battle of Kramatorsk in April-July 2014 obtained by those participating?

E103_Q005	What groups, organizations, or sides was Alexander Mozhaev (aka "Babay") affiliated with prior to 2014?
E103_Q006	What groups, organizations, or sides was Alexander Mozhaev (aka "Babay") affiliated with in 2014?
E103_Q007	Where was Alexander Mozhaev (aka "Babay") located during the Siege of Sloviansk and/or the Battle of Kramatorsk in April-July 2014?
E103_Q008	Who was targeted during the attack at Kramatorsk Airport on April 15, 2014?
E103_Q009	Who were the combatants during the attack at Kramatorsk Airport on April 15, 2014?
E103_Q010	Who carried out the seizures of the police stations in Kramatorsk and/or Sloviansk on April 12, 2014?
E103_Q011	Who assisted with the seizures of the police stations in Kramatorsk and/or Sloviansk on April 12, 2014?
E103_Q012	Who carried out the attack on a separatist roadblock in Sloviansk on April 20, 2014 (Easter Sunday)?