

Novaya Gazeta

What happened to Anna Politkovskaya?

Details about the health status of our reporter and the events of 1 – 2 September in Rostov-on-Don. In the days of this tragedy, hundreds of our colleagues, civil servants, readers were interested in our reporter's fate. They assumed that her presence in Beslan could be useful. But Politkovskaya didn't arrive in Beslan.

...First of September, evening. Politkovskaya is sent to "Vnukovo" in the editorial staff car. Before that she had been in contact with a number of Russian politicians and Maskhadov's representative in London, Ahmed Zakayev. The essence of his proposals: All who can get into contact with the terrorists are obliged to do this immediately. Without calculating the consequences. To save the children. "Let Maskhadov go and negotiate with them". Zakayev conveys that Maskhadov is ready to do this without any conditions and guarantees.

At "Vnukovo", flights to Vladikavkaz are cancelled. Flights to the nearest cities are cancelled as well. Politkovskaya is checked in three times, and three times she can't leave. The editorial staff gives the order: to Rostov, and from there by car. The "Karat" airline takes Anna on board.

A necessary detail: Politkovskaya hadn't had the time to eat for the whole day. On the aircraft (she is an experienced person) she refused the food, she had brought her own porridge. She felt very well. She only asked the flight attendant for tea. And ten minutes after drinking it she lost consciousness, but had the time to call the attendant.

Later she remembers everything in fragments. The phantastic efforts of the doctors of the aid station at Rostov Airport. They tried to get her out of the coma and succeeded. The brilliant work of the doctors of the Infection Department at Clinic No. 1 in Rostov. Under miserable conditions they resuscitated her with all their improvised materiel - they even coated plastic bottles containing hot water. Dropper, needles, in the morning - stable consciousness.

Grigory Yavlinksy, our colleagues from "Izvestia" (Special Correspondent Vladimir But), General Solodovnikov made all efforts so that the physicians would manage an "almost hopeless" task, according to the doctors. They succeeded.

On the evening of 3 September, with the help of our friends (thank you, Messrs. bankers!), Anna was taken on a private airplane to one of the Moscow clinics. The Rostov doctors gathered to send her on the way. The analysis by the Rostov laboratory isn't ready yet. And the first analyses, which were made already at the airport, were destroyed for unknown reasons. The Moscow doctors directly stated: the toxin is so far unknown, but it entered the organism from outside, in the aircraft.

Until the explanation of all circumstances, we don't want to voice the "conspiracy version". However, the situation with the journalist from "Svoboda", Babitsky, taken from the flight to the North Caucasus on suspicion of transporting explosives (!) (of course they didn't find any), and the case of Politkovskaya force us to assume that the attempt was made to prevent a number of journalists who have a name in Chechnya from shedding light on the tragedy in Beslan.

Politkovskaya is now at home under the care of doctors. In their opinion, an unknown toxin has seriously affected her kidney, liver and endocrine system. What will be needed for rehabilitation is impossible to know, unfortunately.

Well, why aren't the service members who are so concerned about Politkovskaya's activity, interested in her profession, after all? To prevent terrorist acts, for example?

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