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CHECHEN OMBUDSMAN CALLS REPUBLIC'S PROSECUTOR INCOMPETENT

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Moscow, 16 May: Chechen human rights ombudsman Nurdi Nukhazhiyev has said that the republic's prosecutor's office is failing to ensure that human rights legislation is observed.

"It can be said with all due responsibility that, to my great regret, the Chechen Republic's Prosecutor's Office has not managed to become a monitoring institution that ensures that legislation is observed. People's rights are being violated when the law is not observed or, quite the opposite, in attempts to observe the law," reads a copy of Nukhazhiyev's statement made today at parliamentary hearings in **Chechnya**, and obtained by Interfax.

"I will cite an example. Neither the Chechen Republic's Prosecutor's Office nor the military prosecutor's office have fully investigated any of the 292 cases of abduction of people in which there is all the necessary evidence that staff from various law-enforcement and security agencies were involved," he said.

"We are holding meetings and discussions and people are suffering. On this issue, which falls under the remit of the prosecutor's office's monitoring bodies, there is the most urgent need to initiate judicial proceedings over the failure of the prosecutor's office to take action. Human rights campaigners see no other way out," Nukhazhiyev said. "There is no appropriate procedure for people to be received locally by city and district internal affairs bodies, or by the prosecutor's office. This is why people are having to turn to parliament, the ombudsman's office or directly to the president of **Chechnya**."

"The ombudsman's office receives some 150 people every day. Is this normal? This means that they were treated unlawfully by the bodies which were supposed to ensure respect for their civil rights. This is why it is necessary to take the matter of the prosecutor's incompetence up with the Prosecutor-General's Office," Nukhazhiyev said.

"They arrive as colonels and depart as lieutenant-generals but the republic's problems remain, and we are the ones who are going to be blamed," he added.

"We know from expert estimates that Russia, and **Chechnya** within Russia, come first in terms of the number of judicial decisions which have not been executed. Let's put it like this: the republic's reputation is today upheld only by successful restoration work that is evident, and the personal reputation of the Chechen Republic's president," he said.

"Therefore, before another meeting with the law-enforcement agencies is held in parliament, it is necessary to dot all the i's, to establish who is responsible for what, who has not done enough where, who should get the stick and who should get the carrot," he said.

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