



Anti-Chinese Sentiment in Kyrgyzstan

OE Watch Commentary: The group Kyrk Choro (Forty Knights, sometimes called the Kyrgyz Choroloru, or Kyrgyz Knights) made headlines in Kyrgyzstan in December 2014 when its members conducted a raid on a nightclub in Bishkek and briefly detained several Chinese nationals for allegedly soliciting prostitutes. While it initially appeared to be an act of vigilantism, the raid turned out to have been sanctioned by Kyrgyz authorities, who previously signed a memorandum of understanding with the group to provide support to law enforcement. The government charged a few members of Kyrk Choro for conducting the raid beyond the limit of the memorandum, but the group continued to carry out similar raids targeting companies with foreign employees (mostly Chinese) in what it stated was in protection of the country. While the group has stayed out of the headlines over the past few years, the accompanying excerpted article from *Vecherniy Bishkek* reports on recent Kyrk Choro activities.

The article mentions how the group has recently “visited companies in Chuy Region” alongside the Kyrgyz State Migration Service and the Interior Ministry (MVD) and lists some of the companies they visited. While the article does not mention it, these companies are reportedly Chinese owned and employ an unknown number of Chinese nationals. The article also notes how Kyrk Choro was “in charge of the recent rally held in protest against ‘Chinese expansion,’ which nearly grew into riots outside the White House.” The article includes comments by a Kyrgyz economist and a member of parliament, who both warn of the consequences for foreign investment in the country and how China might react. Kyrgyz security forces broke up the recent protest in Bishkek and arrested several of its organizers, though it was not clear if those arrested were members of Kyrk Choro. While the Chinese ambassador in Kyrgyzstan and media in China commented on the recent incidents, the Chinese government has not taken any action in response. In any case, Kyrk Choro appears to be working alongside the government in the same capacity it did before and this will be important to watch if anti-Chinese sentiment in Kyrgyzstan continues to foment. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

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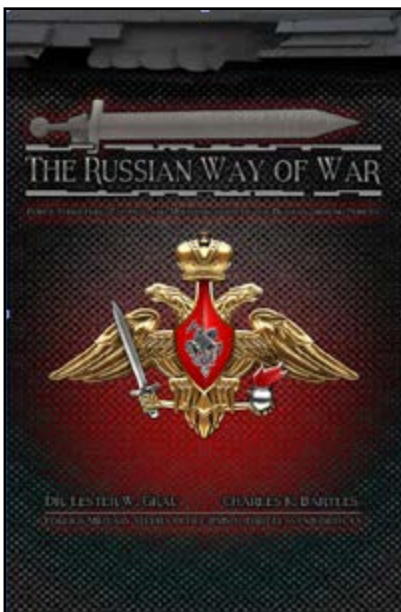
Source: Karypbai kyzy Tolgonai, ““Кырк чоро”, Госслужба миграции и МВД “кошмарят” инвесторов? (Are “Kyrk Choro,” the Federal Migration Service and the MVD “causing nightmares” for investors?),” *Vecherniy Bishkek*, 29 January 2019. https://www.vb.kg/doc/376327_kyrk_choro_gosslyjba_migracii_i_mvd_koshmariat_investorov.html

The Kyrgyz State Migration Service, jointly with the Interior Ministry and the NGO Kyrgyz Choroloru have visited companies in Chuy Region... “They first visited the Tokmak oil refinery and then the LLP Kant Pipe and Roofing Slate Company. Earlier they made a similar tour to the Zhongda oil refinery. The aim of the visits is to check whether (foreign) workers stay legally in Kyrgyzstan,” the Migration Service said.

It is noteworthy that Kyrgyz Choroloru, which the government departments have chosen to monitor investment facilities, is known for its sharp anti-Chinese remarks... The organization was also in charge of the recent rally held in protest against “Chinese expansion”, which nearly grew into riots outside the White House. Now they have had access to foreign workers’ personal data as part of the inspection by the State Migration Service and the Interior Ministry...

“Domestic economists are sounding the alarm, as any checks on businesses are a bad signal, even if they are conducted by state bodies, not to speak of activists,” economist Azamat Akeneyev has told Vecherniy Bishkek... The economist recalled that a struggle for investors was increasing across the world. “However, except for China, Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkey which are our main partners, businesses from no foreign countries are hurrying to come to Kyrgyzstan. On top of this, there are checks involving the openly anti-Chinese Kyrk Choro. By doing similar things we are showing that laws in our country do not work and that one should not rely on any government guarantees...”

MP Kojobek Ryspayev is also outraged by the presence of Kyrk Choro at investors’ business facilities. He said that it was inadmissible for NGOs to interfere in the work of businessmen... “This will impact on our country’s relations with China, which is Kyrgyzstan’s main creditor and trade partner, sooner or later...” MP Kojobek Ryspayev told Vecherniy Bishkek.



THE RUSSIAN WAY OF WAR by LESTER W. GRAU and CHARLES K. BARTLES

At any given time, assessments of the Russian Armed Forces vary between the idea of an incompetent and corrupt conscript army manning decrepit Soviet equipment and relying solely on brute force, to the idea of an elite military filled with Special Operations Forces (SOF) who were the “polite people” or “little green men” seen on the streets in Crimea. This book will attempt to split the difference between these radically different ideas by shedding some light on what the Russian Ground Forces consist of, how they are structured, how they fight, and how they are modernizing.

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