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## **Chechen rebels attack Russian city**

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**14 October, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Chechen rebels attack Russian city**

Chechen rebels have attacked government buildings in the southern Russian city of Nalchik. Up to 300 armed militants attacked their targets at exactly the same time. Moscow responded quickly and used massive force to fight the rebels. There were soon bloody street battles and fighting spread throughout the city. Citizens panicked and ran to the safety of their homes to avoid the gunfire and explosions. More than 60 people have died, including 50 attackers. The fighting is continuing as small groups of rebels continue to cause problems for Russian troops.

A group linked to the Chechen rebel army said it was responsible for the attacks. It also carried out the Moscow theater siege, which saw 130 citizens die in 2002, and the Beslan hostage crisis, in which 344 civilians died in 2004. The group is fighting for an independent and Islamic Chechnya. Up to 90 percent of the population is Muslim. The latest attack will cause problems for Mr. Putin's tough image. He often claims his army has control of the area. He promised the region economic aid last year to create jobs. However, little help arrived and people remain unemployed and angry.

## **WARM-UPS**

**1. CHECHNYA SEARCH:** Walk around the class and find as much information as you can on Chechnya. After you have finished, sit down with your partner(s) and share your information. What did you find out that was interesting? What was surprising?

**2. FIGHT:** Would you ever use a gun in a fight or war? In which of the following cases would you choose to fight? Explain your reasons why to your partner(s). Change partners often to find out other reasons for fighting or not fighting.

- a. To help win the war on terror
- b. To protect your religion
- c. To get food and water
- d. To defeat an army invading your country
- e. Because your government told you to fight
- f. To protect your home and family
- g. To gain independence for your area
- h. Other

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Chechnya / rebels / Russian cities / armies / targets / safety / panic / gunfire / independence / Islamic states / poverty / Vladimir Putin / being unemployed*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. CHECHNYA:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Chechnya. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think all regions in which most people want independence should be able to have it. Students B think they shouldn't be able to have their independence. Change partners often.

**6. NEW GEOGRAPHY:** Thirty new countries have been created since 1990. How many can you name? Do you think the following names should be added to the list of names recognized by the United Nations as real countries? What do you know about them?

|           |        |            |                   |
|-----------|--------|------------|-------------------|
| Chechnya  | Taiwan | Somaliland | The Basque Region |
| Kurdistan | Aceh   | Palestine  | Kashmir           |

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Chechen rebels have launched an attack in Moscow's streets.           | T / F |
| b. Russia's army used massive force to fight the rebels.                 | T / F |
| c. People ran out of their homes to see the gunfire and fighting.        | T / F |
| d. Small groups of rebels continue to cause problems for Russian troops. | T / F |
| e. Al-Qaeda is thought to be behind the latest attacks.                  | T / F |
| f. A rebel group is fighting for an independent Chechnya.                | T / F |
| g. The majority of the Chechen population is Christian.                  | T / F |
| h. Many people in the Russian south are poor and angry.                  | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| a. up to           | answered     |
| b. armed           | soldiers     |
| c. responded       | says         |
| d. avoid           | behind       |
| e. troops          | as many as   |
| f. linked          | emergency    |
| g. responsible for | connected    |
| h. crisis          | escape       |
| i. claims          | jobless      |
| j. unemployed      | gun carrying |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. rebels have                        | aid                           |
| b. armed                              | cause problems                |
| c. used massive force                 | of their homes                |
| d. ran to the safety                  | militants                     |
| e. small groups of rebels continue to | and Islamic Chechnya          |
| f. A group linked                     | attacked government buildings |
| g. fighting for an independent        | and angry                     |
| h. Mr. Putin's tough                  | to fight the rebels           |
| i. economic                           | image                         |
| j. people remain unemployed           | to the Chechen rebel army     |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**WHOOPS!** Four of the eight words in bold in each paragraph are incorrect. Find and delete them. In pairs / groups, think of a better word.

### Chechen rebels attack Russian city

Chechen rebels have **attacked** government buildings in the southern Russian city of Nalchik. Up to 300 **arm** militants attacked their targets at exactly the same **clock**. Moscow responded quickly and used massive force to **fight** the rebels. There were soon bloody street battles and fighting spread throughout the city. Citizens panicked and ran to the **danger** of their homes to avoid the gunfire and explosions. More than 60 people have **dead**, including 50 attackers. The fighting is continuing as small groups of **rebels** continue to cause problems for Russian **troops**.

A group **blinked** to the Chechen rebel army said it was responsible for the attacks. It also carried **out** the Moscow theater siege, which saw 130 citizens die in 2002, and the Beslan **hostage** crisis, in which 344 civilians died in 2004. The group is fighting for an independent and Islamic Chechnya. Up to 90 percent of the **popularity** is Muslim. The latest attack will cause problems for Mr. Putin's **tough** image. He often **clams** his army has control of the area. He promised the region economic **aid** last year to create jobs. However, little help arrived and people remain unemployed and **happy**.

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocations, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**gun**' and '**fire**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. WHOOPS!** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "CHECHNYA" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about Chechnya and the problems it creates for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| • rebels   | • linked      |
| • armed    | • siege       |
| • bloody   | • hostage     |
| • avoid    | • independent |
| • died     | • claims      |
| • problems | • remain      |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Do you like to follow news of Russia?
- d. What do you know about Chechnya?
- e. Do you think Chechen's should have their independence or are they terrorists?
- f. Why did East Timor get independence from Indonesia but Chechnya cannot get independence from Russia?
- g. Mr. Putin's main election promise was to defeat Chechen militants. He hasn't. What do you think of this?
- h. Is Mr. Putin right to respond with such massive force?
- i. Why could ex-Soviet states such as Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Estonia, etc. have independence but not Chechnya?
- j. What is your image of Russian troops?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. What do you think of Vladimir Putin?
- d. Do you think Vladimir Putin cares about or understands the majority Muslim population in Russia's south?
- e. Do you think Mr. Putin will beat the separatists in Chechnya?
- f. Do you think Mr. Putin would act differently if the separatists were Christian?
- g. What do you remember about the Moscow theater siege and the hostage taking at the school in Beslan?
- h. Would the region be more peaceful if Chechnya became independent?
- i. Do you think putting money and investment into poor areas can reduce the danger of people turning to terrorism?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## **SPEAKING**

**THE NEXT COUNTRY:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these “non-countries” should be next to be recognized by the United Nations as an official country

| “Non-country”     | Reasons for being a country | Reasons against being a country | Chances of becoming a country |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chechnya          |                             |                                 |                               |
| Kurdistan         |                             |                                 |                               |
| Taiwan            |                             |                                 |                               |
| Aceh              |                             |                                 |                               |
| Somaliland        |                             |                                 |                               |
| Palestine         |                             |                                 |                               |
| The Basque Region |                             |                                 |                               |
| Kashmir           |                             |                                 |                               |

Change partners and compare your decisions.

Return to your original partners and report on what your previous partners decided.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Chechen rebels attack Russian city**

Chechen rebels have \_\_\_\_\_ government buildings in the southern Russian city of Nalchik. Up to 300 armed \_\_\_\_\_ attacked their targets at exactly the same time. Moscow responded quickly and used massive force to fight the rebels. There were soon \_\_\_\_\_ street battles and fighting spread throughout the city. Citizens \_\_\_\_\_ and ran to the safety of their homes to avoid the \_\_\_\_\_ and explosions. More than 60 people have died, including 50 attackers. The fighting is continuing as small groups of rebels continue to \_\_\_\_\_ problems for Russian troops.

A group \_\_\_\_\_ to the Chechen rebel army said it was responsible for the attacks. It also \_\_\_\_\_ the Moscow theater siege, which saw 130 citizens die in 2002, and the Beslan hostage \_\_\_\_\_, in which 344 civilians died in 2004. The group is fighting for an independent and Islamic Chechnya. Up to 90 percent of the population is Muslim. The \_\_\_\_\_ attack will cause problems for Mr. Putin's \_\_\_\_\_ image. He often claims his army has control of the area. He promised the region economic \_\_\_\_\_ last year to create jobs. However, little help arrived and people \_\_\_\_\_ unemployed and angry.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Chechnya. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. NEW COUNTRY:** Choose an area of the world that wants to be an independent country. Make a poster about it. Include facts on its history and why it should be an independent country. What is stopping its independence? Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson.

**4. REPORTER:** Imagine you are a reporter in the Russian city of Nalchik. Write your report in as much detail as you can about the attack by the Chechen rebels and the response from the Russian army. Show your report to your classmates in the next lesson. Which one was best?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. T      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| a. up to           | as many as   |
| b. armed           | gun carrying |
| c. responded       | answered     |
| d. avoid           | escape       |
| e. troops          | soldiers     |
| f. linked          | connected    |
| g. responsible for | behind       |
| h. crisis          | emergency    |
| i. claims          | says         |
| j. unemployed      | jobless      |

### PHRASE MATCH:

|                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. rebels have                        | attacked government buildings |
| b. armed                              | militants                     |
| c. used massive force                 | to fight the rebels           |
| d. ran to the safety                  | of their homes                |
| e. small groups of rebels continue to | cause problems                |
| f. A group linked                     | to the Chechen rebel army     |
| g. fighting for an independent        | and Islamic Chechnya          |
| h. Mr. Putin's tough                  | image                         |
| i. economic                           | aid                           |
| j. people remain unemployed           | and angry                     |

### WHOOOPS!

#### Chechen rebels attack Russian city

Chechen rebels have attacked government buildings in the southern Russian city of Nalchik. Up to 300 **armed** militants attacked their targets at exactly the same **time**. Moscow responded quickly and used massive force to fight the rebels. There were soon bloody street battles and fighting spread throughout the city. Citizens panicked and ran to the **safety** of their homes to avoid the gunfire and explosions. More than 60 people have **died**, including 50 attackers. The fighting is continuing as small groups of rebels continue to cause problems for Russian troops.

A group **linked** to the Chechen rebel army said it was responsible for the attacks. It also carried out the Moscow theater siege, which saw 130 citizens die in 2002, and the Beslan hostage crisis, in which 344 civilians died in 2004. The group is fighting for an independent and Islamic Chechnya. Up to 90 percent of the **population** is Muslim. The latest attack will cause problems for Mr. Putin's tough image. He often **claims** his army has control of the area. He promised the region economic aid last year to create jobs. However, little help arrived and people remain unemployed and **angry**.