

Yuri Khubonshoyev - † 16 December 2012



In the midst of the humanitarian crisis in GBAO in early 1993, Daulat Khudonazar introduced me to Yuri Khubonshoyev as a person in whom I could have confidence for the implementation of all aspects of the planned programme of the Aga Khan Foundation for emergency deliveries of food to GBAO. Yuri more than fulfilled my expectations.

A man of great energy, strength of purpose, honesty, modesty and human warmth, Yuri quickly solved day-to-day problems ranging from finding sources of supply of food, arranging transport, settling difficulties with police, customs officials and military personnel.

Without Yuri there would have been famine in the Pamirs.

In 1996 Yuri was involved in putting down a putsch attempt in Khorog by a criminal character who claimed to have a mandate from the leader of the United Tajik Opposition, Sayid Abdulloh Nuri. Little was reported at the time about this putsch attempt and little has been written since. After the events of July-August this year, it is important to remember that at that time, 16 years ago, there were tents on the main square in Khorog, armed men roaming the town and the leader of the putsch sitting in the office of the Governor/Rais. Yuri negotiated with the opposition commanders for their withdrawal and arranged for a communication with Nuri to ask whether the putsch had indeed been carried out at his request. Nuri's staff answered that this was not the case and the putsch leader was expelled.

Without Yuri, there could have been a continuation of the civil war in the Pamirs.

I extend my deepest condolences to Yuri's family and pay personal tribute to a colleague and friend in whom I always placed my full trust.

Robert Middleton