

It is just a matter of time until the next catastrophe

# Mayak - Chernobyl - Lessons not Learned

*Mayak Nuclear Accident, September 29, 1957 4:20pm, in the city of Ozyorsk, Chelyabinsk Region, Ural, Russia.*



## The facts of the accident

- *Explosion of a tank with liquid radioactive waste near MAYAK plant*
- *20 million curies of radiation were released to the atmosphere*
- *23 villages had to be evacuated, erased from the face of the earth, 10.000 inhabitants lost everything they had*
- *23.000 sq km of territory including three regions (Chelyabinsk, Sverdlovsk, Tyumen) were radioactively contaminated - today called the "Eastern Urals Radioactive Track" (EURT)*
- *217 cities and villages with a total population of 270.000 people were affected*

## The consequences for the population

- *illness and death for generations*

## Typical story of affected population

### *Nadezhda Kozlova*

- *Engineer in Mayak from 1949 and liquidator of the accident in 1957*
- *Her dose - 772,8 MZV (1952 - 1960)*
- *She died in 1965 from cancer of the lymph system*

## Mayak complex in operation today

- *Reprocessing spent nuclear fuel from e.g. former Soviet countries, Bulgaria, Hungary*
- *Recurring accidents*
- *The low level liquid radioactive waste is still polluting the Techa river*



# The past, the present and the future

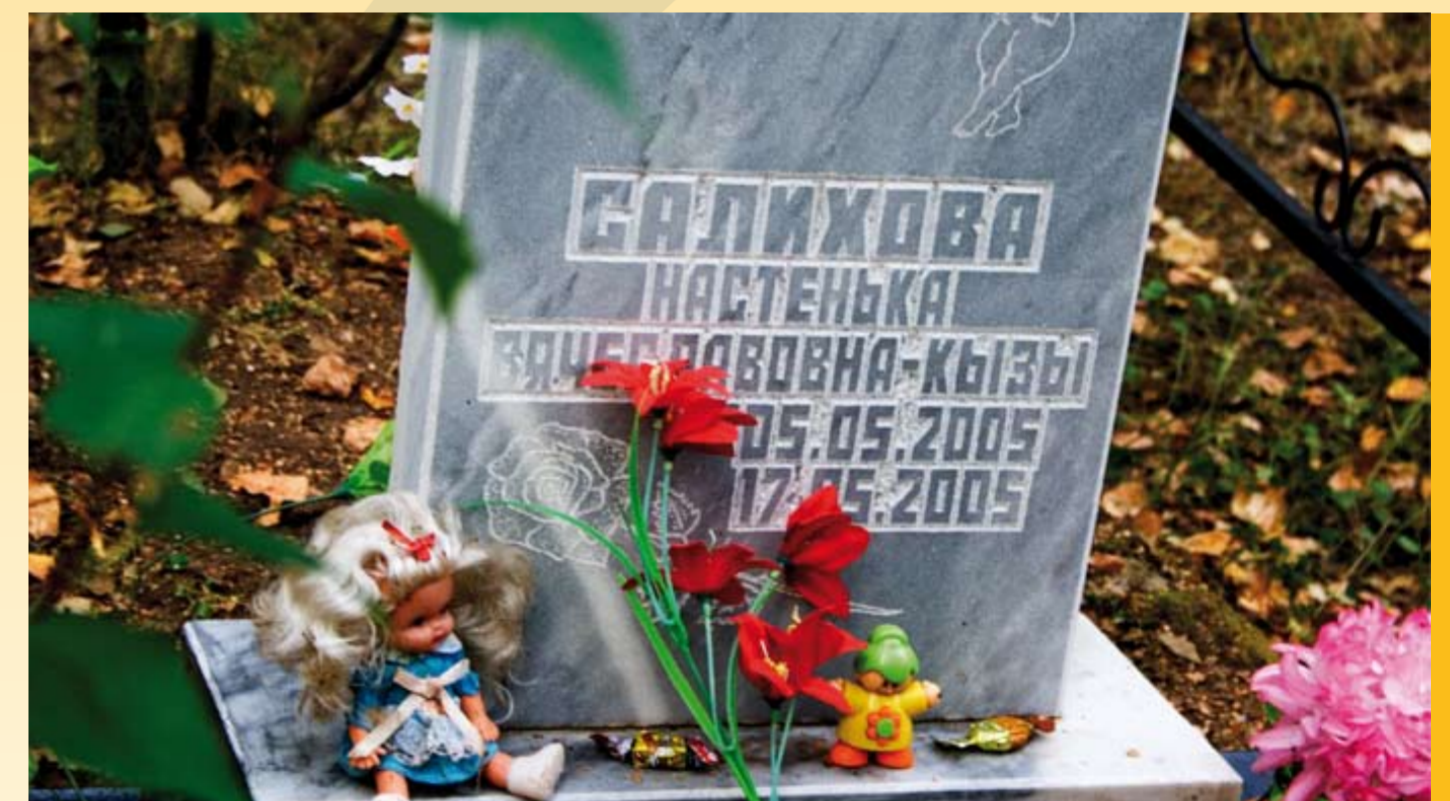
**Gulnara Ismagilova (born 1948), a child clean-up worker after the Mayak accident, helped to bury contaminated harvest underground at the age of 9.**



*“We were gathered together and told to harvest. It seemed strange to us to bury the harvest. And around there were military police; they guarded us so nobody would run away. The majority of students in our class died of cancer later on, and those who didn't are very ill, women suffer from infertility”*

## Her situation today:

- She can not prove that she was a child radiation clean-up worker, all official files have been destroyed
- According to a new law, she may in the future receive a mere one euro per month social compensation.
- She still lives in the contaminated village Tatarskaya Karabolka (around 400 inhabitants) and fights for the evacuation of the village. After the nuclear accident of 1957 the village had been identified for evacuation, but it never took place.



## The twelve days of Nastya Salikhova

To this day there is an elevated level of radiation in the village. There are 7 cemeteries in the village. The impact of ionizing radiation is much more destructive on the body of a child than it is on an adult body. Nastya Salikhova just lived twelve days.

### Impressum

These posters are based on the presentation of Nadezhda Kutepova, The PLANET OF HOPES, Representative of the national environmental group "Ecodefense" in OZERSK, Chelyabinsk region, Russia, 2007 at the Commission on Sustainable Development at the United Nations in New York, USA in 2007, which is available as a download under wecf.eu and also on the exhibition „A 50-Year Catastrophe, 50 years after the accident at the MAYAK complex, Chelyabinsk region“ of Environmental group "Ecodefense!" (Russia) with the support of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation, Germany, August 2007, which is available under <http://ecodefense.baltic.net.ru/stash/exhibition>.

If you would like to organize an exhibition in your city/country, please contact the organisers by telephone at +7 (985) 7766281 / 7766546 or e-mail at [ecodefense@gmail.com](mailto:ecodefense@gmail.com)

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## The theatre of the civic organisation

### “Our Children”

The organisation is run by the parents of children with disabilities. There are 900 children with disabilities among the 100 000 citizens of Ozyorsk. The only specialised facility for children with severe disabilities has a capacity of 25 children, but in fact, there are already 33 children living there, and many more in need of treatment.

# Radioactive contamination is not visible, but the effects are tangible



## Warning

*The contaminated “Eastern Urals Radioactive Track” (EURT) is not properly fenced. The only signs to be found are similar to this one – and they are set a distance of a few kilometres.*

*The contamination is not visible, the forest looks normal. People ignore the symbols, they gather mushrooms and berries. They are often not aware of the risks.*

## The Techa river

Signs warning of radiation danger are posted by the river. Just now - when you read this - low level liquid radioactive waste is still polluting the river.



## Ruins of Muslyumovo

A village 32 km from a dumping site for radioactive waste from MAYAK. This much-troubled village is one of four settlements by the Techa that still exist. Most of the residents, including the children, suffer from radiation-related diseases.



The Khabbassov family wanted to move away, but in 2007, the state authorities denied them this right.



## Berries have ripend

For inhabitants of the poor Bashkir villages in the vicinity of the MAYAK complex, picking mushrooms and berries in the contaminated area means a significant support for the family's budget. On the federal highway Yekaterinburg – Chelyabinsk, this woman is selling berries within increased radiation levels.



## The Beryozovaya Roshcha Cemetery

in Ozyorsk. These graves will be filled within one month. Statistics show that between 3 and 10 citizens of Ozyorsk die every day.