

THE AUTHORITIES AND OPPOSITION OF KYRGYZSTAN ON THE EVE OF THE APRIL POLITICAL CRISIS OF 2010.

Кыргызстандын бийлиги жана каршылык күчтөр 2010-жылы апрелдик саясий кризис алдында

Власть и оппозиция Кыргызстана накануне апрельского политического кризиса 2010 г.

The article is devoted to the study of the political situation in Kyrgyzstan on the eve of the April political crisis of 2010. The policy of the power to strengthen the authoritarian-family regime, incl. anticonstitutional reforms in the field of public administration, amendments to the Constitution of the country, as well as an increase in tariffs for housing and communal services and electricity twice, etc are considered. The opposition's actions against this policy have also been analyzed: holding a people's kurultai, making demands to the authorities, attempt to unite opposition forces throughout the republic.

Keywords: power; opposition; Constitution; political crisis; amendments; kurultai.

Макалада 2010-жылкы апрель саясий кризистин алдында Кыргызстана саясий кырдаал каралат. Мамлекеттик саясаты үй-бүлөнүн бийликти режимин кучтутуу, анын ичинде мамлекеттик башкаруу системасындагы реформалар, конституция өзгөртүүлөр, ошондой эле турак жай-коммуналдык кызматтарга, электр энергиясына бааны жогорулатуу жана башка өзгөртүүлөр каралат. Бул саясаттына каршы каршылык күчтөрдүн иш-аракеттери изилденет: элдик курултайды өткөрүү, бийликке каршы талаптарды көрсөтүү, буткул елке боюнча каршылык күчтөрдү бириктирүү аракеттери.

Урунттуу сөздөр: Бийлик; каршылык күчтөр; Конституция; саясий кризис; өзгөртүүлөр; курултай. *Статья посвящена изучению политической ситуации в Кыргызстане накануне апрельского политического кризиса 2010 г. Рассмотрена политика власти по укреплению авторитарно-семейного режима, в т.ч. антиконституционные реформы в области государственного управления, вправки в Конституцию страны, а также повышение тарифов на жилищно-коммунальные услуги и электричестве в два раза и др. Проанализированы также шаги оппозиции, направленные против этой политики: проведение народного курултая, выдвижение требования властям, попытка объединения оппозиционных сил по всей республике.*

Ключевые слова: власть; оппозиция; Конституция; политический кризис; вправки; курултай.

In March 2005, the people of Kyrgyzstan managed to interrupt the process of “reverse transition” from democracy to authoritarianism for a while, which occurred during the regime of the first president. In the republic prerequisites for the return to the channel of democratic processes which were launched at the dawn of sovereignty were formed. However, as the course of subsequent events showed, the short period of democratization was replaced again by an increase in authoritarianism. K. Bakiyev, having received power and proclaiming a course for carrying out cardinal democratic reforms, began to delay their conduct. The authorities clearly showed their desire to maintain an authoritarian-family regime.

The President, while strengthening his and his family power, actively appointed “his own people” to the key posts. The elder son of President Marat was appointed deputy chairman of the State Service for National Security. The Bakiyev brothers held various positions, for example, Zhanysh was in state of State Guard Service, Marat

was the extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador in Germany, Adyl was a sales representative and adviser on economic and investment issues, etc.

Since October 2009, President Bakiyev started a series of reforms in the system of public administration in violation of the Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic. First of all, the public administration and all state committees were abolished and the Presidential meeting was created. The members of this meeting were all heads of the establishments that were the part of the Institute of the President, as well as the State Counselor for Defense, Security and Law Enforcement, the Speaker and the Prime Minister.

Secondly, the President’s Institute has been created, consisting of the presidential staff apparatus and secretariat, the Central Agency for Development, Investment and Innovation (CADII) (functions – the formation of a strategy for restructuring the economy, supporting business and entrepreneurship, attracting investments, developing a national economic program). Two new positions were en-

visaged in the structure of the institute: the state adviser to the head of state on defense, security and law and order issues (coordinator of all law enforcement agencies) and the state minister of foreign affairs [1]. CADII, as one of the most important sectors of the financial and economic sphere, was headed by Maxim Bakiyev (son of the President).

Thirdly, 14 ministries (finance, justice, defense, internal affairs, agriculture, energy, etc.), 7 agencies (antimo-nopoly regulation, social security, culture, communications, architecture and construction etc.) and 6 services (execution of punishments, financial intelligence, border, tax, customs, supervision and regulation of the financial market), as well as two bunds (state material reserves and compulsory health insurance) and the State Registration Service under the government were formed.

Fourthly, the State Service of National Security and the State Service of the Financial Police with the subordination to the head of state were removed from the government [2].

At the end of 2009, the President initiated amendments to the Constitution concerning the already implemented reforms of public administration in order to give them legitimacy. From the Basic Law articles on the Presidential administration, the Security Council, etc. were excluded. The head of state was entitled to form advisory and consultative bodies, for example, the Presidential Meeting. The main amendment radically changed the order of execution of presidential powers in case of impossibility of their implementation by the head of state. Instead of the Prime Minister or Speaker of Parliament, according to the current Constitution, these powers could be transferred to a person who will be elected by the presidential council from among its members. Naturally, there was no secret for anyone in Kyrgyzstan that this person would be Maxim – the son of the President.

It is obvious that these constitutional amendments were the beginning of a more profound reform of the power vertical and preparation for the implementation of the project – dynastic transfer of power, as the opposition claimed. It is likely that over time it would lead to disappearance of prime minister's post and the executive power would be headed personally by the president. This was written by many experts [3].

The policy of President Bakiyev to strengthen the family vertical of power caused a violent political discontent of the civil society and the opposition of the republic, which manifested itself in the form of protest rallies demanding the resignation of the head of state.

The growth of protest moods intensified due to the twice increase in tariffs for housing and communal services and electricity (January 2010), the introduction of

additional payments for cellular communications. This led to an increase in prices for food, for example, sugar has risen in price two-fold. Despite this, since July the government planned the second stage of tariff increase almost five times. These anti-social steps of the government caused a general outburst of national outrage, creating the basis for a real social explosion in the country in the face of deteriorating socio-economic situation, unemployment, poverty of the bulk in population.

On February 15, 2010, the parliamentary fraction of the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan demanded the authorities should introduce a moratorium on raising tariffs.

The first alarm signal for the authorities were rallies in the regional center of Naryn. On February 24, 2010, around 1000 protesters gathered at the outskirts of the city, the main requirement of which was the reduction of electricity and heat energy tariffs, the restoration of privileges for alpine conditions (free of charge 110 kilowatt/hour, 50 percent wage surcharge) [4].

On March 2010, the new rally was held here. New requirements were added to old requirements: the cancellation of the sale of Severelectro, the release of General I. Isakov, the immediate resignation of the head of CADII Maxim Bakiyev [4].

On March 2010, representatives of the Naryn residents met with Prime Minister D. Usenov and voiced their demands. However, the authorities didn't intent to implement them.

In the south, in Alai district, supporters of former defense minister I. Isakov, who was sentenced to 8 years for abuse of official authority, rallied. They demanded the cancellation of the verdict and release of Isakov, the dismissal of Bakiyev's relatives from the state posts they occupied and the departure of Maxim Bakiyev from the country.

On March 17, 2010, the United People's Movement held a people's kurultai of opposition forces. About 2000 people took part in its work, including opposition leaders, representatives of public organizations, human rights activists, deputies from opposition parties, businessmen, youth, etc. The Kurultai called for an action struggle against the president's regime and put forward the following demands to the authorities:

- abolition of tariffs increase for electricity, heat, hot and cold water supply;
- the cancellation of the sale of OJSC Severelectro and Kyrgyztelecom for a pittance as illegal, the suspension of the sale of other energy facilities (Oshelectro, Jalalabadelectro, Vostokelec-tro);

- withdrawal of amendments to the Constitution of the country, liquidation of CADII and other illegal state bodies;
- exemption of the sons and daughters of the president from their state positions;
- restoration of freedom of speech and mass media, provision of broadcasting of Azattyk radio throughout the country, opening of access to independent Internet sites, provision of an airtime on state TV and radio channels for representatives of the opposition and civil society, etc [6].

The kurultai was formed by the Central Executive Committee under the chairmanship of R. Otunbayeva to monitor the implementation of the requirements. For the authorities, the deadline for fulfilling the requirements was set to March 24th. Otherwise, the opposition planned to hold kurultai in all regions of the republic in order to establish a non-violent way of “truly popular power” on April 7, 2010.

On March 23, 2010, the authorities assembled the kurultai of consent to determine the national interests and requirements of modernity [7,8]. In his speech at the kurultai, K. Bakiyev said that it was necessary move to a “deliberative democracy”, which is most suitable for the current realities of Kyrgyzstan since this model of democracy has deep roots in the traditions of Kyrgyz people - in kurultai conducting [9]. The head of state indicated his desire to deprive the citizen of country of the constitutional right to participate in the formation of system of public administration in Kyrgyz Republic.

The requirements of kurultai weren't implemented. To prevent the holding of people's kurultai on April 7, 2010, the head of state organized a special headquarters in the composition of the highest political elite and the heads of

power structures. All power structures of the National Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Prosecutor's Office, as well as the media, governors and akims turned up under the control and order of headquarters. The headquarters set strict conditions for the members of government and local authorities to restore order on the ground right up to the use of force to fight the opposition [10, p.16].

The desire of authorities to prevent the holding people's kurultai by forceful methods provoked the subsequent development of events. So, on April 6, 2010, the authorities made unsuccessful attempts to forcefully localize a protest rally in the regional center of Talas in connection with the arrest of B. Sherniyazov (one of the leaders of Ata-Meken party) who came here to participate in kurultai. The protesters seized the building of regional administration, took governor of the region as a hostage and proclaimed an alternative governor. Despite the fact that reinforcements were sent from Bishkek, the protesters seized the building of the Talas Department of Internal Affairs on April 7, weapon fell into the hands of protesters.

On the night of 6 to April 7 more than 10 opposition leaders were detained in the capital and in regions, including A. Atambayev, O. Tekebaev, T. Sariev, E. Kaptagaev and others [10, p.6]. These arrests were carried out to decapitate the opposition on the eve of the planned protests. The authorities hoped that the arrests of the leaders would help to extinguish the protest moods. Arrests on the contrary caused even greater discontent among the masses and the government remained alone with an indignant, self-indulgent and already uncontrollable mass of people action at their own peril and risk.

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