

GUERRILLA LEADERS LISTED ON ISRAELI WEBSITE AS JEW KILLERS WITHOUT REASON — LITHUANIAN RESEARCH CENTER

VILNIUS, Sep 28, BNS - The Association of Lithuanian Jews listed Lithuanian guerrilla, fighters against Soviet oppression, as Jew killers without a valid reason, says Birute Burauskaite, director of the Lithuanian Genocide and Resistance Center.

According to the website of the Israel-based association, prominent post-war resistance leaders Juozas Luksa and Adolfas Ramanauskas were among those who assisted the Nazis in the Jewish massacre during World War II.

"The list includes names of our guerrilla. An investigation has shown it is not correct. They really had nothing to do with the killings," Burauskaite told BNS on Tuesday.

The website www.lithuanianjews.org.il has published names of about 3,000 Lithuanian residents who allegedly took part in the Holocaust. Nevertheless, a research carried out by the Lithuanian Genocide and Resistance Center showed that some of the persons had been listed without a valid reason.

"We launched a thorough and in-depth investigation. We are aiming to work out a computerized database of all Holocaust perpetrators within the shortest possible period and establish at least approximate numbers of Lithuanian citizens who assisted the Nazis and perpetrated the Jewish annihilation in Lithuania," Burauskaite said in her presentation of the center's activity report at the parliament on Tuesday.

In her words, the task was started in the last quarter of 2009 and established that merely 301 of the 1,737 examined names could have taken part in the Holocaust. Some 885 persons on the list were examined in the first half of 2010, including 322 who had an opportunity to assist Nazis in the killing of Jews.

"I am not saying they were killers of Jews, only a court can establish this. Nevertheless, there is evidence that they could have been," Burauskaite stressed.

"In case our opponents start to criticize us and say that we are artificially reducing the number, we will have facts and documents regarding every name, specifying a battalion and the location they worked in. We will ask the critics to present their proof. We cannot approve an a priori number and say it is correct without any investigation," she added.

Nevertheless, she acknowledged that the research of documents revealed new names who could have helped the Nazis in the annihilation of the Jewish nation.

In her words, the materials the center has collected could be made public in the future.

Calculations suggest that about 200,000 Jews of Lithuania perished during the Nazi genocide in 1941-1944.

Vilnius newsroom, +370 5 2058507, politika@bns.lt