

Complete bewilderment also reigns at "Urengoigazpromstroï" Trust, which is directing the construction of the field itself. Several days ago, this trust was assigned the first relief project. Only the proposal is that it be built not in the tundra, but in the district centre.

Yu. Vakuyev, First Secretary of the Yamal District Committee of the CPSU, explains this unexpected proposal: "We have a long waiting list for housing, and so we decided to exploit this opportunity to improve the situation."

Vakuyev's plans are expansive. In addition to apartment houses, he is pushing for the construction of a sport centre and a whole series of other projects. There's no denying that these facilities are of need to the district settlement of Yar Sale, where cultural and communal facilities have for many years been in a state of neglect. But what connection does this have with the restoration of agricultural lands, hunting grounds, and fishing waters?

"None whatsoever," agrees Yuriï Iosifovich, "but to this day we still do not know how to restore them."

It turns out that no one in the district knows what will become of the hundreds of families of reindeer herders, hunters and fishermen, who will be forced from their homes because of the construction. At this time in Yar Sale, the destruction of 24,000 deer is seen as one option. The individuals concerned could be asked to resettle in the district centre, but it is acknowledged that both reindeer herders and hunters would have nothing with which to occupy themselves in the village and that they would probably not be amenable to such a proposal.