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By Helena Bedwell

May 5 (Bloomberg) -- Georgian villagers asked the authorities for permission to kill wolves after attacks left two people and more than 100 head of livestock dead in the past year, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources said.

A wolf pack killed about 21 sheep and a cow yesterday in a village in the eastern region of Kakheti, the latest in a series of attacks in the Black Sea country, Nona Khelaia, a senior specialist at the ministry, said by telephone today. About 30 wolves were killed last year by villagers and police, she said.

Hunting wolves is illegal in Georgia, though the ministry gives "full rights" to rural residents to defend themselves against wolves and other wild animals, Khelaia said.

In February, a pack of wolves attacked and killed a man as he slept on the ground near his home in a mountain village in Kakheti.

Georgian villages in the region were attacked by wolves several times last year. In February 2009, wolves killed a woman, leading authorities to hand out weapons to locals for self-defense. Two weeks earlier, the animals mauled a woman in the area, seriously injuring her throat.

"It's still unclear if wolves really killed these people, since they normally don't attack humans," Khelaia said. "They could have been wild dogs. So we need to be very cautious about giving permission to shoot them."

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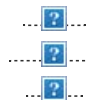
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