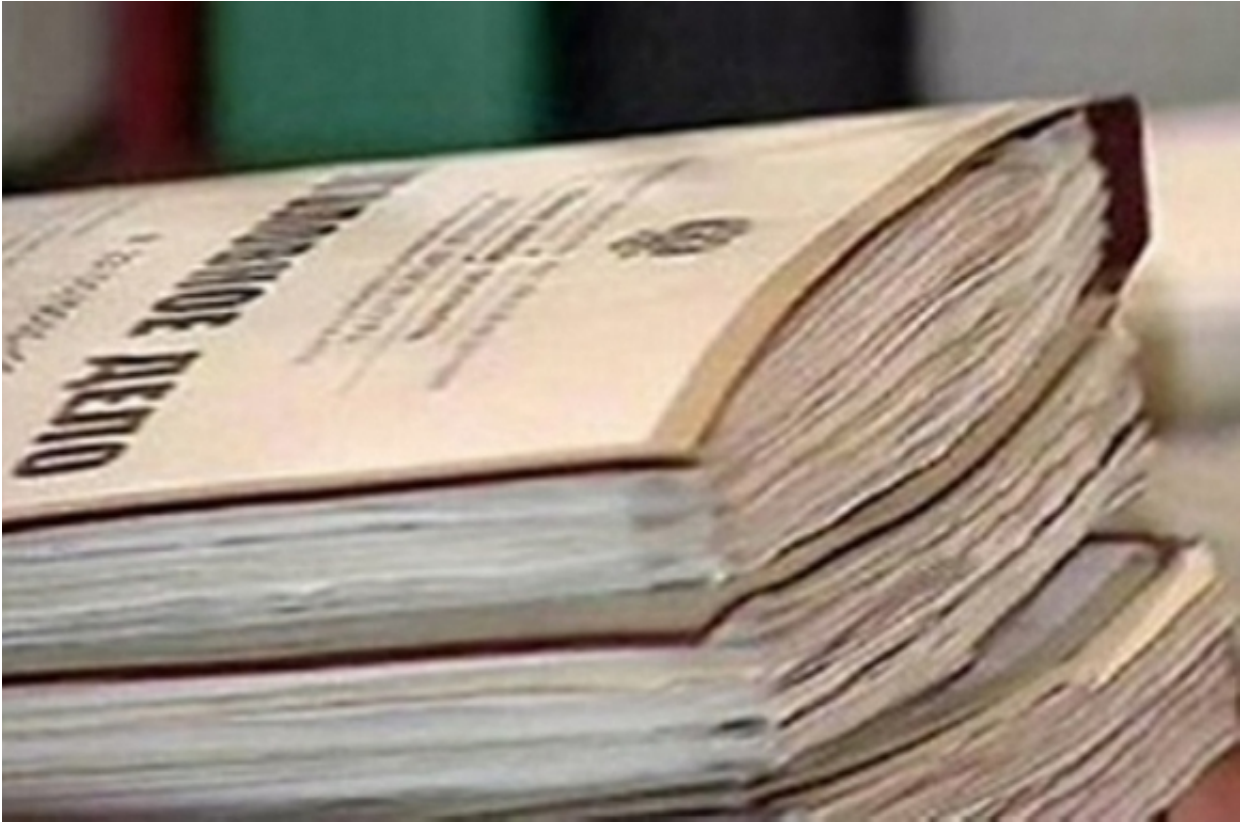

In Penza, probe finished into organising of criminal community engaged in illegal banking for several years



The Penza Regional Directorate of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation completed the investigation into 21 members of a criminal community in accordance with their involvement, under Part 1 of Article 210 (organisation of a criminal community); Part 2 of Article 210 (participation in a criminal community); Paragraphs A and B of Part 2 of Article 172 (banking activities without registration committed by an organised group and attended by profit-making in an especially large amount); Part 2 of Article 187 (manufacturing for sale and sale of forged payment orders committed by an organised group); Paragraph B of Part 2 of Article 173.1 (organisation of a profit-making organisation via straw persons committed by a group of persons in a preliminary conspiracy); Paragraph B of Part 4 of Article 174.1 (accomplishment of financial transactions in amounts of money acquired by a person as the result of their having committed an offence to legalise the ownership, use and disposal of said funds on especially large scale); Part 3 of Article 306 (knowingly false denunciation about a crime joined with the accusation of a person of committing a

grave crime and with the artificial manufacturing of prosecution evidence); Part 2 of Article 307 (knowingly false testimony of witnesses joined with the accusation of a person of the commission of a grave crime); Part 1 of Article 309 (bribery of a witness to give false testimony) of the Criminal Code of Russia.

The case was investigated jointly by officers of the regional investigative directorate, the Penza Regional Directorate of the Federal Security Service of Russia, and the Inter-Regional Directorate over Volga Federal District of the Federal Financial Monitoring Service of Russia.

According to the investigation, not later than January 1, 2009 an entrepreneur born in 1966 created a criminal community to organise illegal banking activities popular among entrepreneurs. He set up a cash-out platform to perform shadowy financial transactions associated with cash-out operations. The criminal community set a fee for cash-out transactions of at least 3% of the cash-out sum.

The organiser of the community attracted 23 other persons to run it. At the moment, there is a separate investigation into three of them due to the fact that they are searched for.

To run the illegal banking activities the members of the criminal community created so-called “technician” entities for providing them with remote banking services and signed forged agreements for supplies of goods, provision of works and rendering of services with the clients who required cash-out transactions. To legalise the appearance of the transactions, payment orders were being forged. Later, the members of the criminal community transferred the money from the accounts of the “technician” firms to corporate entities and individuals upon falsified documents, which cashed it out and delivered to the organiser. The latter referred it to the clients minus the fee.

Since 2009 to 2015, the volume of the criminal community’s transactions exceeded 3.5 billion roubles. The accomplices gained profit of at least 117.5 million roubles.

Moreover, the organiser of the criminal community committed an offence under Paragraph B of Part 4 of Article 174.1 of the Criminal Code of Russia (legalisation (laundering) of funds acquired by a person in an illegal way). Thus, from 2011 to 2015, the leader of the criminal community carried out financial operations exceeding 28 million roubles in total, i.e. on a large scale, transferring them to give a veneer of legality to possession, use and disposal of the specified funds from bank accounts in control of the criminal community’s shell companies to his own account as an individual entrepreneur and accounts of limited liability companies managed by him.

In addition, in July 2015, one of the accused born in 1980, against the backdrop of a conflict, accused his friend and his wife of impropriation of 3.2 million roubles, which they received on the account of the latter for subsequent cash-out. He filed a relevant report to law enforcement agencies about allegedly committed fraud against the criminal community’s shell company. To confirm the allegations, the criminal draw up a fictitious preliminary contract for the sale of land located in Penza, for which the money was allegedly transferred. The criminals and two other witnesses, one of

whom he bribed, gave wilful false testimony during the preliminary investigation. Subsequently, the Second Directorate on Major Crimes Investigation of the Investigations Directorate cancelled the probe under Part 4 of Article 159 of the Criminal Code of Russia.

Taking into account the special complexity of the probe, an enormous amount of investigative actions, criminal intelligence and surveillance operations, expert examinations, it took 3 years to complete the investigation. However, the investigative actions were completed within just over a year; for more than a year and a half, the accused were studying the case files.

Currently, the probe amounted to more than 470 volumes and more than 200 volumes of written material evidence.

The investigation gathered enough evidence, therefore, the probe with the approved indictment will be sent to the court to be tried on the merits.

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