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## **The last member of the gang responsible for robbery attacks in Tyumen Region and Yekaterinburg in late 1990s and early 2000s to stand trial**



The Tyumen Regional Investigations Directorate of the Investigative Committee of Russia has finished the investigation into a 42-year-old man. He is accused of committing offenses under Article 209 (banditry), Article 162 (robbery), Article 158 (theft), Article 226 (theft of firearms and ammunition), Article 167 (wilful destruction of other people's property), Article 161 (plunder), and Article 317 (encroachment on the life of a law enforcement officer) of the Criminal Code of Russia.

The accused had been wanted for a long time and detained in Moscow Region, where he resided under a fake passport, in summer 2019. The preliminary investigation was resumed. Other members of the gang had been convicted and are serving long sentences in penal colonies.

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The investigation established that the gang had been organized by a Tyumen citizen in 1995. Over time, that is, by 2003, it had included 13 persons. In particular, the accused had met a member of the gang in a Tyumen sports school and entered the gang in 2002. The gang had featured strong discipline and undoubted authority of its creator. The leader had planned all the offenses and personally instructed every member before an attack. The organized group had been armed with a big arsenal, from pistols to explosive devices and ammunition. The weapons had been stored in rented garages and in the bandits' places of residence. Apart from that, the gang members had been equipped with advanced communication means produced abroad.

According to the investigation, from 2001 to 2003, the accused had taken part in 10 robbery attacks on bases and storehouses of legal entities in Tyumen Region and Yekaterinburg. The attacks had followed the same scheme: at first, the members had collected information on possible valuable assets located in the base territory, monitored the territory, gathered information on security, time, and frequency of patrols. All attacks had been committed at night. The accused and other gang members, wearing balaclava masks, gloves, and camouflage clothes, armed with pistols and automatic guns, had driven to the object in a car, cut the telephone line, entered the base territory, killed the dogs, attacked the keepers and guards, tied them up, and committed thefts. In this, one member of the gang had stayed in the car near the crime scene and listened to the police radio. The gang had encroached on weapons and ammunition of officers of a private security service, money, household and computer equipment, food supplies. In total, they had stolen property for over 4 million rubles.

Apart from that, in summer 2002, the gang leader had developed a plan to steal a large sum of money from a bank in the Nizhnyaya Tavda settlement of Tyumen Region by digging a tunnel from a neighboring house. For this purpose, one of the gang members had applied to the owners with an offer to sell the house but they had resolutely refused. Due to that, on September 5, 2002, the accused and his accomplices had doused the house with gasoline and set it on fire. The house had been destroyed by the fire. Then the perpetrators had rented a house in a neighboring settlement, brought there all the equipment necessary to dig a tunnel, and dug a 13-meter underground tunnel towards the bank and a 6-meter tunnel from the bank foundation at nighttime in September through October 2002. They had reinforced the walls with wooden panels brought beforehand. However, they had failed to steal the money because the tunnel had been discovered by the bank security service.

The illegal activities of the gang had been suppressed on January 29, 2003, when the perpetrators armed with machine guns, driving cars previously stolen from Tyumen citizens, had been planning to commit an attack on an armored car carrying a large sum of money in the area of the Roshchino Airport. Road Patrol Service officers of the Road Traffic Safety Inspection, who had decided to check their car, had impeded this intent. The accused and his accomplices had targeted the militia officers, as a result of which one of them had received a fatal wound.

In order to establish all circumstances of the committed offenses, investigators of the Investigative

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Committee of Russia carried out a significant amount of activities. They examined the crime scenes, carried out seizures, verified the accused's testimony on-site, performed identification procedures and interrogations. Other investigative and procedural means were conducted. The accused admitted his guilt and signed an immune agreement pre-trial; he has been subjected to preventive detention.

The investigation gathered enough evidence; therefore, the criminal case with the approved indictment was sent to the court to be tried on the merits.

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