
A sentence passed on the gang “black realtors” in St. Petersburg

Court has recognized the evidence collected by the investigation bodies of the Russian Investigative Committee as sufficient to pass a sentence on 20 accused. Depending on the role of each one, they are found guilty of crimes under parts 1, 2 of article 210, paragraphs «а,ж,з,к» of part 2 of article 105, part 1 of article 30, paragraphs «в,ж,к» of part 2 of article 105, part 4 of article 159, paragraph «а» of part 3 of article 126, paragraph «в» of part 3 of article 286, part 1 of article 222, part 2 of article 327 of the Russian Criminal Code (organization of a criminal community, participation in a criminal community; murder; preparations for a murder; swindling; abduction; exceeding official powers; Illegal acquisition, transfer, sale, storage, transportation, or bearing of firearms; manufacture and use of knowingly forged documents).

As found by the investigation and the court, in 2006, in St. Petersburg and Leningrad region members of the criminal community led by Vadim Pleskov, Ivan Shinkarenko and Alexander Melichev (whose case is separated from the general file due to disease) and other accused committed a number of crimes involving abduction and murder of poor persons in order to take their houses or flats. Perpetrators got information on citizens leading asocial life and who owned lodgings. After that the accused got in touch with them, offered to exchange or sell their flats or a job out of the city. When the victims left for Leningrad region the accused killed them and took their homes. They founded a real estate agency through which they were selling those flats.

Three former detectives and a former deputy head of police department are also being prosecuted for helping to cover the traces of the crimes and made it easier for the accused to commit crimes against socially challenged people.

In all, the accused committed 8 murders, 1 preparation for a murder, 18 frauds on a large scale, 4 abductions, 3 facts of office abuse, more than 20 facts of manufacture and use of forged documents, illegal handling of firearms.

The court sentenced 10 accused to 2 to 24 years in prison, others received a suspended sentence of 1 to 7 years in prison.

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