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## **14 members of criminal group taking possession of flats belonging to pool people convicted in St. Petersburg**

The court has recognized the evidence collected by the Main Investigations Directorate of the Russian Investigative Committee for St. Petersburg as sufficient to convict 14 members of a criminal group. Depending on a part of each one in their crimes they were found guilty of crimes under part 1, part 2 of article 210, paragraphs “g, h” of part 2 of article 105, part 1 of article 30, paragraphs “a, c, g, j” of part 2 of article 105, part 4 of article 159, part 3 of article 30 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code (creation of a criminal organization an participation in it, murder and preparing for murder, swindling and attempted swindling).

The investigation and the court have found that in the period from 2004 to 2007, members of “black realtors” criminal group led by the recidivist Nikamagomed Karanev, also known under a nickname of Maga, committed a number of crimes against socially unprotected persons and their property in the territory of St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region.

The criminal organization consisted of two groups, one of which murdered people and the other – took possession of their flats. The swindlers acted on a single scheme: gained confidence of flat-owners and by deceit took them outside St. Petersburg so that they could not prevent unlawful operations with their property. The accused ruthlessly murdered their victims to cover the tracks.

In total, the “black realtors” committed 6 murders, 1 preparation for the murder, 8 episodes of swindling.

To solve the crimes and to collect enough evidence the investigators have carried out more than 30 forensic examinations, about 150 interrogations, no less than 40 on-the-spot checks of testimonies and confrontations. The investigators found that the total damage equals to more than 10 million rubles.

The court sentenced the leader of the group Karanaev to life in prison, 10 members of the group were sentenced to from 2.5 to 22 years in prison, three members were sentenced to suspended 2, 3 and 3.5 years in prison.

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