
Members of armed criminal group Yugo-Zapad (South-West) to appear in court in Mordovia Republic

The Republic of Mordovia investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee have completed investigating a criminal case against Vladislav Pechnikov who was the organizer and leader of the criminal group Yugo-Zapad (South-West) and six resident of the Republic. Depending on the role of each they are charged with crimes under parts 1 and 2 of article 209 (creation of a gang and participation in it), paragraphs "a", "g", "h" of article 105 (murder of two or more persons committed by an organized group and associated with robbery), part 2 of article 30, paragraphs "a", "g" and "h" of part 2 of article 105 (attempted murder of two or more persons committed by an organized group and associated with robbery), part 3 of article 222 (illegal handling of firearms committed by an organized group), part 2 of article 167 (deliberate destruction of other's property by arson) and part 4 of article 150 of the RF Criminal Code (involvement of a minor in the commission of an especially serious crime).

According to investigators, in the late 1980s an organized criminal group nicknamed YugoZapad as most of its members were from the South West district was set up at Leninsky district of Saransk. By the end of 1990s the group was divided in two separate groups which later clashed over spheres of influence. Members of one of the groups, on the orders of its leader, committed a number of serious and especially serious offences against the members of the rival gang. The offences included a murder and attempted murders of 7 people. Among the crimes committed by the gang the most notorious was the murder of CEO of OAO Romodanovsakhhar Feodor Katayev. In the morning of 12 September 2005, in Saransk near Zarechny market the culprits put Katayev off the stolen car and killed him in order to gain control over the enterprise headed by Katayev and further profit from it. They shot Katayev two times from a very close distance from Makarov pistol and he died on the spot. The crime was unsolved for a long time and only in February 2010 in cooperation with operative services the suspects were identified and detained.

Investigators have collected enough evidence and the case of 62 volumes with the approved indictment is accordingly sent to the Republican Supreme Court to be tried on the merits.

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