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## **Members of a gang who committed over 80 different crimes convicted in Irkutsk**



Court has recognized evidence collected by Siberian federal District Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee as sufficient to convict members of gang of Andrei Molchanov. Depending on the role of each they were found guilty of crimes under articles 209, 162, 105, 222, 223, 226, 158 of the RF Criminal Code (banditry, murder, illegal handling and manufacture of firearms, stealing of firearms, theft).

Investigators and court have found that the organized armed group (gang) led by Andrei Molchanov in the period between 2000 and 2005 committed in Irkutsk and Irkutsk Region and in the Republic of Buryatia 14 murders, 60 robberies and a number of other crimes. In all, investigators have established 82 episodes of crimes.

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The members of the gang were held during joint operations of investigators and agents of Main Interior Directorate of Irkutsk Region. After being caught the leader of the gang and several of its members were silent at the interviews referring to article 51 of the Constitution. Others, on the contrary, preferred cooperation understanding that investigators had just too much evidence. Namely, there were conducted more than 100 different expert examinations and the conclusions of ballistic expert examinations identified completely the arms with bullets and cartridges seized from the accused recovered from the crime scenes. At the first stage of the investigation there were some problems with testimonies of the witnesses, who were afraid for their safety, but investigators managed to persuade people that the guilty would be punished. After that local people started active cooperation with investigation. Eventually more than a thousand reports of witnesses' and victims' testimonies were made the basis of the charges. Investigation has taken about 4 years. It was connected with the necessity to consolidate a large amount of evidence and the criminal case includes 275 volumes.

The Irkutsk Regional Court sentenced Andrey Molchanov and Oleg Moskalyov to 19 years in prison each, Robert Gayazov, Vladimir Koloveryov, Roman Maltsev, Andrei Sidnev, Aleksey Lezhnin – to 13 years in prison each, Sergei Lylov – to 25 years in prison, Oleg Vasyutinsky got a suspended sentence of 7 years in prison. Alexander Novosetsev was given a life in prison. In addition a number of the accused were sentenced to fines of up to 1 million rubles to the benefit of the victims.

The organizer of the gang Sergei Andreyev is hiding from investigation and therefore the criminal case against him was severed into a separate law suit and he is internationally wanted.

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