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## **Mafia boss in Saint-Petersburg suspected of setting up organized criminal community organizing channel of illegal drug traffic in Russia**



Saint-Petersburg Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee during investigation into murders has found a mafia boss – Alexander Kuryakov, who organized a criminal community (part 4 of article 210 of the RF Criminal Code). A criminal case has been initiated against residents of Saint-Petersburg Alexander and Andrey Kuryakov, Sergey Tsaryov, Mikhail Belykh, Sergey Osipov, Mikhail Koretnikov, Vladimir Golovkov over signs of crimes under parts 1, 2, 3, 4 of article 210 of the RF Criminal Code (organization, membership in a criminal community (hereinafter organized criminal community), and creation of and membership in the organized criminal community, committed by a person using their official position and a person occupying a top position in a criminal hierarchy).

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Alexander Kuryakov and Sergey Tsaryov were held in August 2012 on suspicions of January 2011 hired murder of a businessman.

According to investigators, in the period between October 1992 and May 1994, Kuryakov, born in Leningrad, using his leadership qualities set up a criminal group to commit crimes in Saint-Petersburg. To the group he involved his acquaintances from the district he lived in, from the school he had studied at and people, with whom he had served his prison time for acquisitive crimes. Members of the group purchased firearms and ammunition to commit crimes including murders for hire. In 1994, under the leadership of Kuryakov, the gang and other persons committed a number of murders, including members of the gang. In 1995, the activity of the group was contained. In 2000, Kuryakov was found guilty of abduction, organization of a murder on lucrative impulse by a group of people under a preliminary conspiracy, extortion, swindling and robbery. In 2002, he was released on parole and gained acknowledgement among the persons involved in criminal activity in Saint-Petersburg as a criminal kingpin. He set up a criminal community to commit grave and especially grave crimes connected with illegal trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances in the Russian Federation and countries of the European Union. The criminal community also had a special unit providing security during the crimes and physical support during conflicts. In 2011, the members of the gang, on the order by Kuryakov, killed the businessman, who had a conflict with the latter connected with financial issues in illegal drug traffic. In addition, to provide security during the crimes the gang had as its member chief of 22<sup>nd</sup> department of Organized Crime Office of the Main Directorate of the Interior Ministry in Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad Region Vladimir Golovkov. He exerted general patronage of non-citing the said persons for their crimes and informing the organizer about investigating and search operations, ways to resist law enforcement agents directed to avoid criminal responsibility. Moreover, Golovkov involved his subordinates to get rid of Kuryakov's rivals and persons, with whom the latter had conflicts, by prosecuting them illegally.

All the said persons, except for Karetnikov, who concluded a pre-trial cooperation bargain, and Belykh, who was held in Germany with a large batch of drugs, are in custody. At present, the members of the said criminal community have been proved guilty in 6 murders, 5 of which were committed in 1994 and 2 counts of criminal activity connected with illegal drug trafficking on an especially large scale in saint-Petersburg. Depending on the degree of their guilt, they are charged with crimes under articles 105, 228, 286 of the RF Criminal Code (murder, illegal trafficking of drugs, exceeding official powers) and article 102 of the Criminal Code of RSFSR (willful homicide).

In addition investigators are conducting an inquiry into 7 counts of criminal activity of the said persons connected with illegal drug traffic in the Russian Federation and countries of the European Union.

At present a set of investigating and search operations are underway to consolidate the evidence of activity of the criminal community under the leadership of Alexander Kuryakov. Beside investigators of the Russia's Investigative Committee the operations also involve personnel of Main

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Office of the Russian Interior Ministry in Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad Region, Office of the Federal Security Service, Federal Drug Control Service and law enforcement in the countries of the European Union. Investigation is ongoing.

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