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## **Pavel Sopot accused of inciting attack on journalist Igor Domnikov to stand trial in Moscow**



Moscow Investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee have finished investigating a criminal case against Pavel Sopot. He is charged with a crime under part 4 of article 33, paragraph "a" of part 3 of article 111 of RF Penal Code (incitement of infliction of deliberate bodily harm to victim in connection with their professional activity).

According to investigators, Eduard Tagiryanov organized a gang in the mid-90s in the town of Naberezhnye Chelny, Republic of Tatarstan. By late 90s the sphere of its influence covered several regions of Russia, including Moscow, Lipetsk Region and others. In early 2000s members of the gang started offsets between Gazprom-Avia and enterprises in Lipetsk Region. Novaya Gazeta correspondent Igor Domnikov at that time published a number of critical articles about the social situation in Lipetsk Region. In response the businessman Pavel Sopot, as investigators believe, decided to organize an attack on the journalist to consolidate his positions among the local businessmen. Sopot told about his plan to a friend of his Tagiryanov, who supported the idea and ordered his inferiors to track the journalist down, find out where he lived and attack him. Executing the order, members of the gang started following Domnikov from the building of Novaya Gazeta to his place of residence and on 12 May 2000 hit him with a hammer no less than 10 times into the head. Domnikov died later in hospital.

Tagiryanov and other members of the gang in 2007 were convicted of this crime by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tatarstan. The criminal case against persons who ordered the hit and instigators was severed into a separate lawsuit and thanks to meticulous work of the investigators together with operational officers of FSIN of Russia and officers of criminal detection department of the Main Office of the Russian Interior Ministry, it was possible to identify and detain the instigator.

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The investigators have gathered enough evidence, therefore the case with the approved indictment has been forwarded to court to be tried on the merits.

Investigating criminal cases into murders of journalists is one of the priorities in the activity of the Russia's Investigative Committee. It has a conception of additional measures to organize probes in such crimes. The leadership of the Investigative Committee has criminal cases over crimes committed against journalists under their special control.

Head of Media Relations V.I. Markin

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