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## Activity of criminal community stopped in Saint-Petersburg



Activity of a criminal community (criminal organization) of more than 15 people has been stopped as a result of joint work conducted by the Northwestern Federal District Investigation Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee and the Main Office of the Russian Interior Ministry in Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad Region. The organization acted since 2008 and was formed to commit serious crimes – frauds, stealing of budget funds on an especially massive scale by illegal compensation of VAT using forged documents.

The said criminal community had clear structure, was stable, had good inflow of money and equipment, internal hierarchy, solidarity, corrupted connections in different bodies of state authority, law enforcement bodies and courts in Saint-Petersburg, specialists, including lawyers having special knowledge in the area of jurisprudence, customs and tax laws.

According to investigators, since 2008, members of the criminal community organized stealing of the money by illegal compensation of VAT from the RF budget worth 4 billion rubles on behalf of 39 legal persons. To make it look like legal economic activity the members of the community used

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over 75 legal persons registered on nominal directors.

The investigating bodies of the Northwestern Federal District Investigation Directorate have started two criminal cases over signs of crimes under parts 1, 2 of article 210 of the RF Penal Code (setting up a criminal community and membership in it), part 4 of article 159 (fraud by an organized group on an especially massive scale).

Between 12 and 15 February 2014, over 25 searches were conducted in the flats of the members of the criminal community, places they had kept the documents and data carriers. As a result the investigators found a large number of objects and documents indicating that the members of the criminal community had been involved in the crimes. Equity worth over 30 million rubles and a large number of expensive jewelry were confiscated.

6 people were detained on the suspicions of the said crimes, including 34-year-old Mark Bronovsky, one of the heads of a group of companies Sotrans, who, investigators believe was the leader of the criminal community.

5 of them, including Bronovsky, were taken in custody, another one was released on bail.

Investigation is ongoing, necessary investigating and search operations are underway to identify and arrest other members of the community, to gather and consolidate the evidence.

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