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## **In Komi Republic sentence passed upon members of Loginovskaya criminal group**



A court has recognized the evidence gathered by the Investigative Committee for the Republic of Komi sufficient to convict 21 members of Loginovskaya criminal group.

Depending on the role of each one they were found guilty of setting up a criminal organization and membership in it (article 210 of the RF Penal Code), serious and especially serious crimes committed by an armed group (gang) in the period between 1999 and 2008 (article 105), abduction (article 126), deliberate infliction of grievous bodily harm (article 111), illegal deprivation of freedom (article 127), extortion (article 163), fraud (article 159), assaults related to robbery (article 162), robbery (article 161), thefts (article 158), illegal circulation of firearms (article 222) and other crimes.

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The organizers of the group were four men Mikhail Leonov, Alexander Mityanin, Vladislav Trofimov and Sergey Buguyev. The members of the criminal organization had a well-tested system of disguise and protection against law enforcement, the gang acted in a corrupted and massive way. It had a hierarchy classifying its members into seniors, juniors and teenagers. Each of the members had a particular role. There was rigorous discipline with the juniors submitting to the seniors unconditionally. The deviation from the rules was severely punished. All members of the group were athletes doing freestyle wrestling or boxing. During their meetings the members of the group discussed what they had done and planned their future actions.

The group was well armed. In addition to equipment, gears, radio communications adjusted to the waves used by law enforcement officers, they had a lot of firearms, ammunition, explosives and explosive devices. This way, in October and November 2008 during the searches in garages in Ezha district of Syktyvkar, investigators found and confiscated gas pistols, silencers, submachine guns, pistols, tommy guns, hunting rifles, sawn-off guns, a rifle, a lot of cartridges of different calibers, grenades, TNT bombs, detonating fuses to hand grenades, etc.

At first their main source of profit was through extortion. At first they offered businessmen partnership consisting in paying a monthly fee to the gang members. In case of refuse, the businessmen first were intimidated orally and then their property was damaged, as a rule it was either their sales outlets or cars. The extreme way of persuasion was physical violence up to murder.

Since 1999 the members of the gang started to hold annual public freestyle wrestling contest in Ezhva district of Syktyvkar in honor of the founder of the gang Vyacheslav Loginov, killed by a rival gang. In late 2001, the Federation of freestyle wrestling and boxing of Ezhva district of Syktyvkar, Komi Republic was set up and its office became a gathering place for the gang. The office was rigged with special counter spy devices ruling out any control over or recording of talks inside the office, or telephone talks from the office. At their gatherings the gangsters planned their crimes and summed up their performance. In early 2007, Yuri Druzhinin, a gang member, headed non-commercial partnership Association Ezhva against Drugs. The settlement accounts of the said organizations were used by the gang members to steal other's assets by deceit and to extort money from businessmen. Businessmen had to transfer their money to the said accounts. Heads of Ezhva district commercial companies also transferred their money to them, delusional about the aims of the said organizations. About 30 businessmen become victims to the gang.

In 2001-2003, the gang resorted to new forms of getting money – they stole property, mainly from large sales outlets in Syktyvkar. To do that the seniors employed two professional burglars (later murdered by gang members) and officer of Economic Crime Department of Syktyvkar office of Interior Ministry Andrey Dudarek. Each theft was carefully planned, participants were chosen, they went to the place and examined it, then the participants of the sortie got necessary equipment and gears, including cars with invalid state register numbers, means for communicating with each other, radios adjusted to the police channels, camouflage uniforms, police batons, handcuffs, magnet to block alarms, cutting pliers to cut the locks, etc. They stole domestic appliances, fishing and hiking

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goods, musical instruments, equipment, cell phones, cell phone accessories, clothes and other goods.

Twice they acted on hire. In March 2002, they got into the building of Syktyvkar office of Interior Ministry and stole from offices criminal cases and operation register cases against one man and special equipment. In summer 2007, were hired by former chairman of board of Bank of Savings and Development Vitaly Kostrikov, who asked to land chief accountant of Kirov Construction Company in a hospital bed.

In late 2005, a separate unit was formed headed by Sergey Rasov, main function of which was financial provision of activities by contributions from regular murders of citizens and selling their real estates, the so called “black real estate operation”. They found persons who had rent debts and led asocial life, winning their trust by providing free foodstuffs and alcohol and then getting from them powers of attorney for selling their real property. Then they found buyers, made a deal, received money and killed former owners of the sold property. In 2006-2007 the so-called black realtors killed five local residents.

All the members of the gang are charged with 11 murders, including murder of a police officer and an attempted murder. They killed citizens to steal their property, members of their own gang as punishment and of rival gangs.

This way, 25 May 2002, Vladimir Kokorin, an officer of Ezhva district Office of Interior Ministry, Sergey Kokorin’s brother was shot near his garage in Yemvalskaaya street in Syktyvkar. The gangsters demanded from Kokorin either to refuse from renting a shop or involve the gangsters in his business, giving them right to get a part of profit. The victim refused them.

The criminal group’s activity was stopped in January 2008, after its main members were arrested. The investigation against the gang was led for several years by officers of the Federal Security Service, republican Interior Ministry and Main Office of the Federal Penitentiary Service. On 13 January 2008, six members of the gang were apprehended. The rest of them were arrested later. At the time the investigation against the gang was the largest case in the history of the regional investigations directorate. The operatives and investigators had to work in very complicated conditions. Most of the arrested would not admit their guilt or refuse to testify. Only four of them were remorseful and testified against their accomplices. The huge amount of work was done. 59 people were found victims under the investigation of the criminal case consisting of 115 volumes, over 500 witnesses were questioned, dozens of forensic analyses were run. During the probe investigating bodies and operative services developed efficient cooperation, which was then used to the full during the investigation against the Ifa-Kozlov gang, which committed even more serious crimes.

The court sentenced three leaders of the gang Mikhail Leonov, Zlexander Mityanin, Vladislav Trofimov and gang member Valery Nesterov to life in prison to be served in a penal colony with particular treatment. The rest of the gangsters got terms between 8 and 23 years to be served in a

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maximum-security penal colony. Vitaly Kostrikov received a sentence of 4.5 years in prison, but was released as he had already served this time (taking into account the time in custody), Andrey Dudarek and Vasily Salisov were released due to expiry of limitation time.

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