
Interview by Head of Media Relations Department Vladimir Markin to Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper



Tsapok gang killed 12 people by mistake

One of the most high-profile legal processes has begun

On Monday the court in Krasnodar started hearing a case of Sergey Tsapok's gang who carried out a massacre in the village of Kushchevskaya in November 2010.

Apart from Tsapok there are six more in the prisoner's box. Each of them has committed up to 20 crimes. Lawyers defending them are not from Krasnodar, local lawyers wouldn't do that for anything in the world.

This is a jury trial, it was a request of the gang members – according to the law they have such a right.

We asked the official spokesman for the Russia's Investigative Committee Vladimir MARKIN to tell us the details of the case:

- Mr Markin, what was difficult about this investigation?

- The first questionings and going round the neighborhood "on hot scent" undertaken by the local police forces did not give any results at all: "we don't know", "we didn't see", "we didn't hear anything". So when investigators of North Caucasus Federal District Investigations Directorate started interrogations, it became clear that local people were on the one hand intimidated by the gang, and on the other hand had lost any trust in law enforcement. Investigators had to work hard to get in psychological contact with the locals.

- How much time did the investigation take?

- It was just a few days before investigators had specific suspects. It took only 10 days to detain the

leader – Sergey Tsapok. During three months absolutely all gang members, including those fled to Ukraine, were identified and detained. Next difficult stage was to collect evidence proving involvement of each one of them in a brutal murder of farmer Ametov's family and friends. There were over 2,000 interrogations, 600 examinations, 8,000 examinations of documents. The case had 477 volumes. The investigation was complicated by the fact that the accused had to be held in different regions of Russia.

- Why are all these difficulties?

- First of all, they had to be isolated from each other. And the second thing – there was a real threat to their lives.

- What are the results?

- The role of six of the gang members in the murder was established: Sergey Tsapok, Sergey Karpenko, Andrey Bykov, Vyacheslav Ryabtsev, Igor Chernykh and Vladimir Alekseev. Bykov and Ryabtsev have already been sentenced to 20 years in prison each. Sergey Karpenko killed himself in a pre-trial prison. The court will decide for the rest.

- But this is not the only crime of the gang.

- The gang committed crimes for 10 years. Today, apart from direct perpetrators of the murder, other active gang members are waiting for their sentence – Vyacheslav Tsepovyaz, Vladimir Zaporozhets and Nikolai Tsapok, Sergey Tsapok's uncle. In addition, criminal proceedings are about

to finish against 9 more locals of Kushchevskaya, who were not members of the gang, but were close to it. They have committed more than 30 crimes – extortions, robberies.

- During the whole process of investigation everybody was wondering: Why they so ruthlessly killed 12 people, not sparing even children? Was it vengeance?

- Sergey Tsapok was indeed taking his vengeance on the farmer Ametov, he thought that he had killed his brother. But investigators found out that the farmer was innocent.

- But who killed then?

- Another criminal gang in Kushchevskaya headed by a local bandit Vadim Palkin. He had tried to divide spheres of influence.

- That means that Tsapok's gang was not the only one in Kushchevskaya?

- Unfortunately, no. But to sort it out we had to set up a special investigating group. 37 cases more were added to the main case of Tsapok's gang alone.

Изображения



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