

Trial Is Delayed in Drunk-Tank Death

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A Tomsk court has postponed until Aug. 31 the start of the trial of a policeman accused of beating to death a newspaper journalist in a drunk tank in January, Interfax reported Monday.

The trial was postponed because the defendant's lawyer was absent, the report said, citing a court statement.

The police officer, Alexander Mitayev, faces up to 25 years in prison on charges that he struck the reporter, Konstantin Popov, in the groin with a metal object.

Popov, who was tied up when he was beaten, was hospitalized in a coma and died two weeks later.

The case caused public outrage, and several local police officials were fired.

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