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Krasnodar Official Fired Over Village Killings

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Krasnodar Governor Alexander Tkachyov on Wednesday fired a senior regional official over the gruesome murder of 12 people, including four children, in the local Kushchyovskaya village.

The dismissal of Valentin Burlachenko, who headed the regional department for cooperation with law enforcement agencies, is a follow-up on President Dmitry Medvedev's order to find officials responsible for allowing a criminal gang to de-facto take over the village and terrorize residents for years, RIA-Novosti reported.

The family of local farmer Serever Akhmetov was butchered in their house on Nov. 5 along with several neighbors and guests from Rostov-on-Don.

Two suspects, Sergei Ryabtsev and Vladimir Alexeyev, were detained in Ukraine last week and are expected to be extradited once Russian prosecutors file the required paperwork with Kiev. An official in the Prosecutor General's Office said Wednesday that the paperwork had not been filed yet, Interfax reported.

Nine other suspects are already in Russian custody, including Sergei Tsapok, a village resident suspected of leading the gang.

Several local officials have been fired or demoted over the killings, including Krasnodar region police chief Sergei Kucheruk, who was fired by Medvedev in November.

The head of the Kushchyovskaya district police department responsible for anti-extremism, Alexei Khodych, has been arrested for alleged ties to Tsapok's gang.

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