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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Cop Jailed for Journo's Death

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A police officer was sentenced Friday to 12 years in jail for killing a reporter.

The district court in the Siberian city of Tomsk ruled that Alexei Mitayev, 26, was guilty of beating and shooting the 47-year-old reporter, Konstantin Popov.

Popov, a reporter for the Tomskaya Nedelya weekly, was taken into police custody last January to sober up. Mitayev shot him in the genitals after beating him up. The reporter died after nearly two weeks in a coma.

Mitayev said he "freaked out" because of his divorce.

Dozens of police officers have been charged with murder, beatings and other crimes following a public outcry over police abuse.

At least 16 journalists have been killed in Russia since 2000. Most of them had written reports critical of authorities.

(AP)

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