

Racial Restraint Urged as \$1.4M Suit Prepared

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The  Moscow Times

As the Spartak Moscow football club urged fans to avoid a racist rally, the family of an ethnic Russian killed by a Dagestani mixed martial arts champion vowed to seek 1 million euros (\$1.4 million) in court.

Ivan Agafonov, a 19-year-old Muscovite college dropout, died after Rasul Mirzayev, 25, struck him during a quarrel outside a Moscow nightclub earlier this month.

Agafonov's family said Friday that they would sue the Russian Sambo Federation, of which Mirzayev was also a member, for at least 1 million euros in damages, Interfax reported, citing celebrity lawyer Igor Trunov, who represents the family.

The federation, which has suspended Mirzayev's membership indefinitely, denied responsibility for his actions outside the mat.

Mirzayev apparently hit Agafonov after the latter flirted with his girlfriend.

The death has fueled simmering racial tensions in Moscow, and the Spartak Moscow football club asked its fans ahead of a Sunday night derby with CSKA to stay away from a banned rally scheduled by ultranationalists for after the game, Interfax said.

Right-wing radicals, many of whom are football fans, planned to rally in memory of Agafonov.

The team urged its fans to avoid "provocations" by "certain groups of people."

Scores of police officers kept watch in the area around the derby late Sunday to crack down on any signs of a rally.

Mirzayev, who is in police custody, was denied bail, reportedly to placate the ultranationalists.

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