The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

5 Russian Cops Implicated in Fatal Sodomy Attack

By Peter Spinella

March 13, 2012

Investigators said Tuesday that five police officers have been detained in connection with the shocking death of a detainee who, according to reports, was beaten and sodomized with a champagne bottle at a Kazan police station over the weekend.

Federal investigators have taken control over the case, which is sending shock waves across the country, and promised to take tough measures against any police officers implicated in the death of Kazan resident Sergei Nazarov, 52.

"The Investigative Committee will give a harsh legal assessment to the actions of law enforcement officials who allowed a violation of the law," the Investigative Committee said in a statement.

On Monday, Tatarstan police said Nazarov's injuries were self-inflicted.

The five suspects from the Dalny police station where Nazarov was incarcerated have been fired, while four of their superiors have also been fired, the Investigative Committee said.

Investigators identified the five suspects as Fail Sabirzyanov, 25; Almaz Vasilov, 24; Ilnar Ibatullin, 23; Ramil Akhmetzyanov, 24; and Ilshat Garifullin, 25.

Garifullin has admitted to bringing Nazarov into the Dalny station on the outskirts of Kazan on Friday on suspicion of theft, investigators said. There was not sufficient evidence to hold Nazarov, so Garifullin apparently falsified a statement that the man was detained for disorderly conduct, their statement said.

Garifullin has been charged with abuse of power and forgery. The four other suspects are expected to be charged shortly.

On Friday evening, when Nazarov didn't return home from a brief trip to the store, his wife called police and found out that he had been taken into the Dalny station, his brother, Igor Nazarov, told the tabloid Life News. The brother said he went to the station and was told that Nazarov had been detained for disorderly conduct.

Life News reported Sunday that policemen asked Nazarov to show his documents, but he had only gone out to the store and didn't have them on him, so the officers detained him.

"They promised that he'd be freed the following day, but then emergency services called our mother and said Sergei had been taken from the precinct to the hospital," the brother told Life News. "His rectum had multiple tears; a big part of his esophagus was damaged. They had to do a complete operation."

The Investigative Committee said Sergei Nazarov had been rushed around 3 p.m. Saturday from police custody to a hospital, where he underwent surgery. He died on Sunday morning.

Doctors at State Hospital No. 18 said Nazarov managed to tell a paramedic that a champagne bottle had been forcefully shoved up his rectum before he fell into a deep coma, Life News reported.

Local police have insisted that the accusations were false. "There are surveillance cameras in the temporary detention cells," an unidentified police official told Life News. "No victimization has been recorded. Nazarov had been previously convicted eight times. According to our information, he was sent to the hospital because of a discharge of blood; he's got chronic hemorrhoids."

Police have also said Nazarov's injuries were self-inflicted.

On Tuesday, Tatarstan's top police official, Asgat Safarov, ordered surveillance cameras to be installed in all rooms where police investigations are conducted. The cameras will provide round-the-clock monitoring, Safarov said, adding that he had issued the order in connection with Nazarov's death.

Meanwhile, a 20-year-old female resident of Kazan has come forward with allegations that police at the Dalny station beat her and threatened to sodomize her earlier this year in an attempt to force her to confess to a crime she did not commit.

Alia Sadykova told the newspaper Vechernyaya Kazan that she was called into the Dalny police station on Jan. 3 for questioning about the theft of 70,000 rubles ($2,400) from a bookmaker where she worked as a cashier.

She said two officers named Ramil and Marat interrogated her and then began to beat her, threatening to rape her with a bottle if she did not confess.

"They smacked my head against the wall and tore out my hair," she told Life News. "Marat began to beat me, and Ramil held up a bottle and said that he would shove it up my anus."

Sadykova said police held her overnight without food or water, then forced her to confess to charges of hooliganism, for which she received a sentence of five days in jail.

A court later ruled that the charge was falsified after a witness reneged on his testimony that Sadykova had cursed and loitered near the police station while drunk.

Sadykova said she spent more than a month in the hospital and suffered psychological trauma from the beating, Vechernyaya Kazan reported.

She said her mother had gone to police and demanded that charges be brought against the officers who inflicted her injuries but was told that Sadykova "could have thought everything up."

She said she would pursue compensation for her detention.

Correction: An earlier version of this article incorrectly said Sergei Nazarov was arrested around 3 p.m. Saturday. He was arrested on Friday evening and sent to the hospital around 3 p.m. Saturday.

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