

Investigators Dispute Mirzayev Sentence

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Supporters of Agafonov's family blame the interference of senior Dagestani officials for Mirzayev's lenient sentence. **Igor Tabakov**

Investigative Committee on Wednesday disputed the conviction on manslaughter charges of mixed martial arts fighter Rasul Mirzayev, 26, in the death of Ivan Agafonov, 19, in a brawl outside a night club, insisting that Mirzayev was guilty of intentionally causing grave body injuries to Agafonov.

After a Moscow court on Tuesday sentenced Mirzayev, a Dagestani native, to two years of limited freedom, nationalists promised a repeat of the December 2010 mass rally on Manezh Square, which was provoked by the killing of football fan Yegor Sviridov by a North Caucasus native.

Supporters of Agafonov's family have also voiced discontent over the lenient sentence, which they blamed on the interference of senior Dagestani officials in the case.

Investigators had charged Mirzayev with intentionally injuring Agafonov, but state prosecutors had changed the charge to manslaughter. According to the Criminal Code, manslaughter carries a maximum prison term of two years, while the intentional infliction

of grave injuries is punished by up to 15 years in prison.

Investigators' comments Wednesday may also reflect their ongoing turf war with prosecutors over power and authority. The conflict started when President Dmitry Medvedev made the Investigative Committee a semi-autonomous body from the Prosecutor General's Office in January 2011.

Mirzayev turned himself in to police after Agafonov's death and spent about 15 months in pretrial detention.

After his release, Mirzayev reiterated that he "didn't want to kill Ivan" and was eager to help Agafonov's family, he told the Moskovsky Komsomolets daily.

"It hurt me to look at them [Agafonov's parents] at hearings. If someone thinks I didn't care, they shouldn't [think so]," Mirzayev said, adding that he didn't believe that Agafonov's parents would ever forgive him.

Sports promoters and coaches told Izvestia on Tuesday that they were eager to work with Mirzayev, should he continue his fighting career.

Meanwhile, police investigators in Moscow's Northwestern Administrative District have wrapped up a criminal case on armed robbery charges against Agafonov and two friends, the LifeNews tabloid reported, posting a copy of a police report seeking the arrest of Agafonov's friends.

District police spokeswoman Natalya Uvarova told The Moscow Times that a criminal case against Agafonov and his friends had been passed to Moscow's Tushinsky District Court. She refused to elaborate on details of the case, saying it was now within the court's jurisdiction.

Agafonov's friends are accused of stealing several phones from cell-phone seller.

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