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Crime Boss Suspects Detained at Birthday Dinner

By The Moscow Times

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Police raided a restaurant near Moscow and detained four alleged crime bosses and 19 others as they met to plan strategy after the killing of a criminal godfather known as Grandpa ("Ded") Khasan, the Interior Ministry said in a statement Saturday.

The police swooped on the Family Elite-Club restaurant in the town of Nikolina Gora after learning that suspects from Russia and Belarus would meet there to discuss "a series of questions of a criminal character," the statement said.

"During the secret meeting, held under the cover of a celebration of the birthday of a senior so-called 'criminal authority,' the plan was to discuss the next steps after the recent assassination of the head of the Aslan Usoyan 'clan,'" the statement said.

Usoyan was the real name of Grandpa Khasan, 75, considered one of the most influential kingpins of organized crime in the former Soviet Union. He was shot dead on a Moscow street

on Jan. 16 in what authorities said was a contract killing.

Giving only nicknames, the ministry said those detained included two senior crime figures from Russia, Timokha and Kostyl — which can mean crutch, nail or spike — and two Belarussians known as Medvezhonok (Bear Cub) and Pashtet (Pâté).

It said participants had planned to "coordinate the work of organized groups subordinate to the criminal 'clan' of Tariel Oniani," whom Russian media have identified as a rival of Usoyan. Both were born in Georgia.

Interfax identified the four main suspects detained in the restaurant as Alexander Bor, Konstantin Borisov, Alexander Medvedev and Pavel Alexiyevich. It said the birthday they were celebrating was Bor's.

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