

'Gambling Affair' Materials Returned to Investigators

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The evidence incriminating two key suspects in the "gambling affair" has been returned to the Investigative Committee by the Prosecutor General's Office as the turf war between the two bodies rages on.

Prosecutors said that the materials obtained by the investigators did not comply with legal requirements and failed to prove the guilt of Alexander Ignatenko and Dmitry Urumov, Interfax reported Tuesday.

Ignatenko, a former Moscow region deputy prosecutor, and Urumov, former head of the regional prosecutor's department, are alleged to have provided protection for underground casinos in the Moscow region in return for bribes and face up to 10 years imprisonment if convicted.

The "gambling affair" began in February 2011 with investigators' announcement that

businessman Ivan Nazarov owned a chain of illegal casinos that received protection from Moscow region prosecutors.

The case has been widely viewed as a part of a power struggle between the Prosecutor General's Office and the Investigative Committee, which used to be part of the same entity but were separated in 2011.

While the committee has the authority to arrest a suspect, prosecutors can cancel the arrest and stop a case going to trial.

The investigation resulted in the dismissal of several local prosecutor including Ignatenko and Urumov, who were later charged with bribery.

Ignatenko is charged with receiving over 48 million rubles (\$1.5 million) in bribes from the illegal casino network's organizers. He fled the country to avoid arrest and on Jan. 2, 2012, but was detained at Polish ski resort Zakopane. He has been held in police custody since his extradition to Russia on Feb. 7, 2013.

He denies the charges against him and refuses to cooperate with the investigation. He said he will wait until the trial to present proof of his innocence in court.

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