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Convicted Russian Ultranationalist Tikhonov Gets 18 Years Added to Life Sentence

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A Moscow court on Wednesday tacked on an extra 18 years to convicted nationalist killer Nikita Tikhonov's life sentence for his role in a violent extremist group that targeted ethnic minorities.

Tikhonov, already serving life for the 2009 killing of human rights lawyer Stanislav Markelov and journalist Anastasia Baburova, had made a deal with prosecutors in exchange for a swift trial.

Prosecutors had asked the court to sentence Tikhonov to 20 years for co-founding the BORN gang — a Russian acronym that stands for "militant organization of Russian nationalists" — and then participating in its activities, which included murder, illegal possession of weapons and racketeering.

The court found that the aim of BORN was to "carry out extremist crimes and attacks

on citizens, to commit murders for ideological reasons or out of nationalist hatred, and make attempts on the lives of employees of law enforcement agencies," a statement on the Investigative Committee's website said.

Tikhonov admitted to several murders during the trial, including the killing of several anti-fascist activists who sought to counter BORN's activities. The group's victims also include a Muay Thai boxing champion and an employee of the Interior Ministry.

Yevgenia Khasis, Tikhonov's common-law wife, who was earlier sentenced to 18 years in prison for her involvement in the killings of Markelov and Baburova, testified as a witness in Tikhonov's trial, according to online news site MediaZona.

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