

More Members of Deadly North Ossetian Gang Nabbed Amid Crackdown

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Two suspected members of a brutal North Ossetian criminal gang have been detained, the Investigative Committee announced on Monday.

Oleg Dzarakhokhov is believed to have been a high-ranking member of a violent group led by the recently detained Aslan Gagiyeu. Some 40 murders in Moscow, the Moscow region and North Ossetia-Alania have been attributed to the gang.

“Dzarakhokhov organized and played an active role in a crime unprecedented in its cynicism: shooting people attending a funeral in June 2013, in Beslan, North Ossetia-Alania. Two people were killed and two others were injured,” Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin said in a statement.

Dzarakhokhov was arrested Sunday in the North Ossetian city of Vladikavkaz as a result of a joint effort between the federal Investigative Committee and officers of the regional Interior Ministry.

His suspected fellow gang member Ivan Bagayev was arrested in Montenegro. An international fugitive since 2009, Bagayev had been in hiding with the help of a counterfeit Ukrainian passport, according to the Investigative Committee. His arrest was the result of a joint effort between the Federal Security Services, the federal Investigative Committee, the North Ossetian Interior Ministry and Montenegrin authorities.

Investigators allege that Bagayev's role in the gang was to provide the necessary means for the commission of crimes, including weapons, ammunition and transportation. According to Markin, a decision on his extradition to stand trial in Russia is currently being determined.

The North Caucasus branch of the Investigative Committee said Gagiyeu set up his own gang in 2004 to carry out executions of law enforcement officials. Investigators believe the group had at least 46 members.

Among the more high-profile victims of the gang were then-mayor of the North Ossetian capital of Vladikavkaz, Vitaly Karayev, who was killed in 2008, and Mark Metsayev, the head of a police anti-corruption task force in North Ossetia, killed the same year.

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