

Russian Court Acquits Primorsky Partizany Criminal Group of Murder

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A Russian regional court has acquitted five men, known as the Primorsky Partizany, of murder, the Interfax news agency [reported](#) Thursday.

The Primorye regional court said that defendants Alexei Nikitin and Vadim Kovtun have the right to rehabilitation, Interfax reported.

The [Partizany group](#) gained notoriety in 2010 after a series of violent attacks against police in the Primorye region in Russia's Far East — killing two officers and wounding six others. Four of the rebels were captured by authorities after a manhunt spanning several months. Two other group members reportedly committed suicide.

The group was also accused of killing four security guards at a hemp plantation in 2009 as part of an alleged [drugs feud](#). After Russia's Supreme Court ordered a retrial in May 2015, a

Vladivostok court found insufficient evidence against the men and approved the jury's decision on July 20 to acquit them, delivering not guilty verdicts.

Nikitin and Kovtun, who were only implicated in the alleged drugs killing, were freed in the court room, where they had heard the verdict delivered from inside a cage. The judge ruled that the men are owed compensation for legal fees and lost earnings during the period of their detention.

The other three members of the Partizany — Alexander Kovtun, Vladimir Iliutikov and Maxim Kirrilov — are still serving sentences for other crimes.

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