

Cameroon 'Magicians' Detained

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The  Moscow Times

Moscow police reported Thursday that they busted a "magical" fraud scheme involving two Cameroonians who promised to multiply U.S. dollar bills through a ritual involving a towel, an iron, a teapot and "secret ingredients," Interfax reported.

Money was tripled after being wrapped in the towel and sprinkled with the secret substances — which turned out to be cola, iodine and baby talc — a law enforcement source said.

The alleged magicians actually just added their own money to the banknotes wrapped in the towel, using the trick to gain the trust of their clients. The victims later provided larger sums that the suspects could make away with, the source said.

The suspects, identified as Ngosso Achille and Mbala Bardi, are accused of swindling \$35,000 from two unemployed Tajik natives, promising to triple the sum, but actually intending to make away with it, the report said. The Cameroonians were detained in southwestern Moscow when they accepted the money.

Achille and Bardi denied the fraud charges, saying they just played a "Cameroon national trick" on the clients, RIA-Novosti [reported](#) Thursday, citing a police statement. The men face

up to 10 years in prison if charged and convicted of fraud, and police expect that more victims would surface.

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