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Police Check Alleged Road Rage by Ismailov's Son

By Alexandra Odynova

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The Interior Ministry finally reacted Wednesday to last week's violent attack on a Moscow driver by guards escorting a car with a flashing blue light that was reportedly carrying the son of businessman Telman Ismailov.

The alleged victim, Alexei Smirnov, wrote on his blog last week that he was attacked Nov. 24 after failing to give way to a Toyota SUV equipped with a flashing blue light, which gives it priority on the road, because of a traffic jam on the Moscow Ring Road.

The unidentified private security guards, who escorted the SUV in a BMW, broke the front driver's side window and a headlight of Smirnov's Lexus sedan while trying to pull him out of the vehicle. They were chased off by other motorists who intervened, the driver wrote.

A criminal case was opened on charges of property damage, a city police spokesman told RIA-Novosti on Tuesday. He identified no suspects, but earlier media reports suggested that the

car belonged to Ismailov, owner of the now-defunct Cherkizovsky Market, and was carrying one of his two sons.

Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev ordered chief traffic policeman Viktor Kiryanov on Wednesday to check media reports about the accident and look into all of the circumstances, Interfax reported.

“In case the information is confirmed, it means a possible breach of law by some officials,” Nurgaliyev said, referring to the fact that the Ismailovs, not being senior state officials, were not authorized to use the flashing lights. Neither Ismailov, whose fortune Finans magazine estimated at $860 million earlier this year, nor his son has commented on the allegations.

Meanwhile, Moscow traffic police said Wednesday that they would look into a crash involving the city's prosecutor general, Yury Syomin, whose driver rammed a Renault when driving his blue-light-equipped Mercedes into oncoming traffic on Shosse Entusiastov, in eastern Moscow, on Tuesday, RIA-Novosti reported.

No one was injured in the crash, and Syomin promised to compensate the unidentified Renault driver for damages, the report said.

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