The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Body Found Near Missing Girl's Village

By Alexandra Odynova

May 03, 2011



Investigators said Tuesday that the body of a woman with a fractured skull has been found in the woods near Rodnik, a luxury village in the Moscow region where the 16-year-old daughter of a senior LUKoil executive vanished in March.

The body was discovered last Wednesday and forensic experts are trying to establish its identity, the Investigative Committee said in a statement.

Interfax, citing an unidentified law enforcement official, said jewelry belonging to the missing girl was on the badly decomposed body. The official said a DNA test was required to identify the woman, a process that could take two weeks, but investigators are "95 percent" sure that she is the missing girl.

Viktoria Teslyuk, 16, was last seen on March 27 as she left Rodnik for Moscow to attend a math lesson with a private tutor. She never reached her destination, and a sweeping search of the area produced no results.

Her father, Robert Teslyuk, is an executive with LUKoil Overseas Kazakhstan, a subsidiary of LUKoil, the country's biggest private oil company. Speculation has swirled that she might have been kidnapped for ransom, but investigators say no one has approached her family with ransom demands.

Police remain baffled over Teslyuk's disappearance, ruling out robbery, kidnapping or a personal conflict with friends, who have been questioned and provided alibis, the news web site Lifenews.ru reported, citing an unidentified law enforcement official.

The body found in the woods also had not been robbed, as evidenced by the presence of the jewelry, the official said. "It's clear that this wasn't the work of your ordinary street punks," he said.

The Investigative Committee statement said the woman met a "violent death" caused by a heavy blow to the head that fractured her skull.

The woman was also stabbed, although there were no signs of sexual assault, the official told Lifenews.ru. The official said the body had been covered with snow and only discovered in the spring thaw.

Teslyuk's family has not commented on the grim finding — and perhaps for good reason after a statement was published last month on the web site of the Arkhangelsk region branch of the Investigative Committee that local investigators had found her dismembered body in a plastic bag. The committee later denounced the statement as a gruesome hoax, saying its web site had been hacked and that the body belonged to someone else.

Children of wealthy businessmen have been targeted by criminals in the past. Last month, a Moscow family of three was arrested on charges of kidnapping the son of software multimillionaire Yevgeny Kaspersky. A ransom of 3 million euros ($4.3 million) was sought for the 20-year-old Ivan Kaspersky, who was freed unharmed. Investigators said the suspects abducted Kaspersky in order to pay their debts.

In 2009, the teenage son of Rosneft vice president Mikhail Stavsky, also named Mikhail, was kidnapped for ransom in Moscow. He was released after two months, and two Chechens with ties to Islamist militants were convicted in the kidnapping last year. It remains unclear whether a ransom was paid.

In 2002, LUKoil chief financial officer Sergei Kukura was kidnapped in Moscow by unidentified assailants, only to be released a few days later. The criminals were never found, and the motive for the kidnapping was not disclosed to the public.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/05/03/body-found-near-missing-girls-village-a6735