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15-Year-Old Thief Killed by St. Petersburg Police

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A 15-year-old boy caught stealing a woman's purse died early Sunday after being viciously beaten by a St. Petersburg police officer, Interfax reported.

The teenager was seen by police robbing a 45-year-old woman in the Nevsky Region of St. Petersburg early Sunday morning, Itar-Tass reported. The police pursued the suspect and "applied physical force" to prevent him from fleeing.

Subsequently police took the boy to the regional police station for questioning and, upon arrival, beat him with their fists and a mop handle. An ambulance was called to treat injuries sustained by the boy, who died en route to the hospital.

Officer Denis Ivanov of the Nevsky Region police was arrested Monday in connection with the crime, according to a statement on the Investigative Committee web site. Ivanov could not explain his motives for attacking the boy, the statement said.

The head of the Nevsky Region police was sacked Monday by St. Petersburg police chief Mikhail Sukhodolsky, Interfax reported.

"There is no control in that department," Sukhodolsky said at a police meeting, Interfax reported.

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