

Teen 'Tried to Blackmail' Billionaire for \$10M

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Suleiman Kerimov **Denis Grishkin**

A 17-year-old high school student has been detained on suspicion of trying to blackmail billionaire Suleiman Kerimov and a St. Petersburg city official into paying him a combined \$11 million, news reports said Wednesday.

Police commandoes flown in from Moscow swooped down on the St. Petersburg apartment where the unidentified teen lives with his mother on Tuesday, detaining him and seizing his laptop computer.

The teen, whom police say has confessed, purportedly sent e-mails to Kerimov and Vladislav Petrov, head of St. Petersburg City Hall's energy department, in which he identified himself as a hit man ordered to kill them, news site Fontanka.ru said.

The letters offered to cancel the murder contracts in exchange for \$10 million from Kerimov and \$1 million from Petrov.

Petrov turned to the police, while Kerimov reportedly complained directly to Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev and Federal Security Service director Alexander Bortnikov.

Investigators traced the e-mails' IP address back to the 17-year-old teen.

At 6 a.m. Tuesday, the Moscow and St. Petersburg commandoes surrounded the six-story apartment building where the teen lives and broke in through the window of his one-room, first-floor apartment, Kommersant said.

The teen has told investigators that he sincerely believed that he could get away with his scheme, the news reports said.

The teen has been charged with extortion, which carries a maximum prison sentence of four years, and is now back at home under house arrest.

Kerimov, who serves as a Federation Council senator, is worth \$7.8 billion, according to Forbes magazine, and owns the Anzhi Makhachkala Football team as well as stakes in Gazprom, Sberbank and the world's largest potash producer, Uralkali.

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